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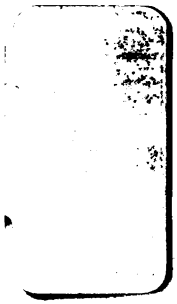
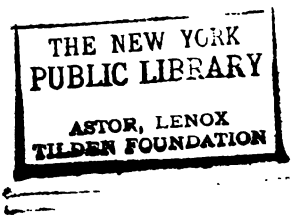


WITH "BOBS" AND KRÜGER.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In Cronje's Laager at Paardeburg. Explosion of a lyddite shell from one of the naval guns, as seen through a telescope. The concussion from the explosion was supposed to kill everything within a radius of thirty yards, while the black, poisonous fumes were intended to suffocate as well.

With "Bobs" and Krüger

Experiences and Observations of an American War Correspondent in the Field with Both Armies

Illustrated from Photographs

Taken by the Author

By Frederic William Unger
Late Correspondent in South Africa for The Daily Express, London.

1901
Henry T. Coates and Company
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NOTE.

THE author wishes to state that in the following narrative he has confined himself strictly to facts.

TRANSFER FROM C. U. MAY 1926

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WITH "BOBS" AND KRÜGER.

CHAPTER I.

SOUTH AFRICAN PECULIARITIES.

A MORE perfect understanding of the war in South Africa will be the result when attention is given to some of the striking characteristics of that country, so strangely different from anything that the dwellers in towns and cities on this the extreme opposite side of the earth may imagine.

South Africa, which in spite of its immensity is only the lower point or tip of the great "dark continent," is a succession of vast plateaus ascending from the sea in a series of immense terraces, for the main part flat and level as the sea itself, but with occasional wrinkles of its surface forming irregular mountain systems; or, sprinkled about in a careless way, the more or less perfectly cone-shaped kopjes, resting on the smooth veldt (plateau—prairie) as though pushed through from beneath as a bluntly pointed pencil pierces a sheet of paper. Where one plateau ends, and the ascent to the next begins, a long, ragged edge appears, presenting to the eye, from below, an endless range of mountain gorges, weirdly beautiful, sublimely grand, almost oppressive in the sense inspired of permanency and changelessness; while from above the eye gazes across a vast plain, apparently limitless in extent, fading away into dim haziness, through which perhaps the faint outlines of a series

of kopjes appear, and which we hesitate to believe are sixty, eighty or a hundred miles away. Coming closer to an isolated range of these South African mountains, we see that as a rule their summits are perfectly flat, sometimes many acres in extent, and we realize that there rests a portion of the surface of an ancient plateau long since washed away to the lower level, leaving the flat-topped kopjes as silent sentinels guarding the mysteries of the veldt, and indicating the extent to which it has been conquered by time and the elements.

The greater part of this country is semi-barren. Sporadic garden-spots of territory exist, while stretches of desert comparable only to the bad lands of the Dakotas abound, and threaten to overwhelm like a rising sea the beautiful island-like oases which the sturdy burghers have torn from the reluctant soil and converted into beautiful homesteads seldom less than five or ten miles distant from one another.

Fringing the coast line, and penetrating the interior from fifty to a hundred miles, a most luxuriant growth of vegetation, forest and jungle, is slowly creeping farther inland. Back on the high veldt, between the cultivated spots and the desert regions, are wide areas where a scanty growth of cactus thorn-bush and the South African sage, the Karroo bush, appears, affording a meagre subsistence for the scattered herds of cattle, sheep and ostriches from which the inland Boer derives his sole support.

At the border of the Free State the soil becomes more fertile, the surface of the country begins to undulate slightly, increasing to heavily rolling stretches as we advance farther eastward, and on pushing northward and into the Transvaal, the veldt folds up, the country "comes closer," the fifty-mile views disappear, and the traveller or soldier finds himself in a rough mountain land where the reefs of the Rand and their fabulously rich gold-bearing

ores are focused, at once the blessing and curse of the early settlers and their followers.

When a government official many years ago rushed breathlessly into the presence of President Krüger with the information that gold had been discovered in paying quantities, and that now all the burghers would become rich, that far-seeing old statesman is reported to have replied,

"For every ounce of that cursed metal mined in this land the burghers of the Transvaal will pay with great drops of their and their children's blood." A grim prophecy of the war of 1900.

Through all this country very little water is found. The rivers are far apart, and for the greater part of the year their beds are dry sand. For two or three months heavy rain storms are frequent, and then the farmer stores up his year's supply of water behind great dams, built to impound the water that falls on many thousands of acres of the land about his home.

Occasionally a more fortunate emigrant, slowly toiling across the desert with his tedious ox-teams, came upon a spring, and decided that he had gone far enough, so he stopped there; and years afterward his children and his neighbors' children came to know the place as "Springfontein" or "Ossfontein," and, as in the case of the capital of the Free State, where others too gathered about, they called the place "Bloemfontein"—the spring where the flowers grow.

About these places a few trees would grow up, carefully planted and tended by the settlers. Tall, slender poplars, frequently outlining twenty to thirty acres of land, with an immense hedge of aloes or century plants between, would form a spacious cattle-kraal. Around the dam a cluster of weeping-willows would be seen, while a dozen or more

gigantic blue gums, towering a hundred feet overhead, shaded the homestead from the noonday rays of the sub-tropical sun, which beats mercilessly down from a continuously cloudless sky above.

Then when evening drew near, when the native boys had driven the cattle into the kraals, the pious old burgher would call his entire household, man-servant and maid-servant and the stranger within his gates, together for evening worship, while the sun dropped behind the edge of the veldt, the darkness of night quickly covering the farm land, the cloudless sky above affording insufficient

A Typical Boer Farmhouse in the Free State, near Bloemfontein, owned by the Schmidt Family.

background to enable the rays of the departing king of day to even tint the brief twilight.

Of the climate no criticism can be made; for with its high altitudes, dry, invigorating air and bright sunshine, it has built up into strong men and women hundreds of physical wrecks that have gone there from other countries in search of the health that awaited them.

South Africa has been summed up in a few words as being "A land without trees, where the fields are without grass, the flowers without smell, the birds without song, the rivers without water, the skies without clouds, the

evenings without sunsets, the men without honor and the women without virtue." The most of this is true. The honor of men in that country, as of men elsewhere, is elastic, and a stranger, especially if he asks questions in English, is likely to be lied to, and to find that the "next farm, just beyond the kopje," is quite ten miles farther; but that the women are without virtue is as false of South Africa as of England.

It is not strange that in so surprising a country should develop unexpected differences in war from all our conceptions of warfare, based on the histories of other conflicts. As the Spanish-American contest was a revelation to Europe of the power of our resources and a renewed reminder of the efficiency of our navy, so the Anglo-Boer conflict has been in an even broader sense full of astounding revelations to the armies of the civilized world, because of the scene of the war and of the great changes brought about by modern implements of slaughter employed in this their first great test in a land-war on a large scale between white men as enemies.

And so when friends and relatives gather about as the returning warrior, or the defeated patriot, an exile in strange lands, tells his tales and re-fights his battles, one may expect to hear of a war from which all the old-time pomp, parade, enthusiasm and romance have departed. It is strange to hear of great armies without uniforms,—for the Boers fought in their oldest clothes and the British army was clad in khaki, a yellow, mud-colored material which, after a few weeks' wear, bore about as much resemblance to the brilliantly-dressed legions of one hundred years ago as a workman's dirty overalls do to a glittering full-dress uniform. Strange it is, too, to hear of officers without swords,—a sad blow to the English regimental dandies. When Boer sharp-shooting made overlong lists of officers

killed, all insignia of rank was stripped from the aristocrats in the field, and the officers were ordered to shoulder rifles, to make them indistinguishable from their men; then indeed did the Imperial army degenerate into what their simple-hearted adversaries compared to "a swarm of locusts creeping on over the veldt"—a khaki blur on the grey-green landscape, steadily moving onward, through long, tiresome marches, with never the gladdening beat of a drum to aid in keeping step; for in that still air all noise

"A River Without Water," near Cape Town, with camp guarding Railway Bridge against Threatened Rebellion in Cape Colony.

was suppressed to avoid warning a possibly careless enemy of the army's advance.

The British soldier will tell of great battles in which he never saw the enemy, for this was the prerogative of the few men on the scouting line and the officers equipped with powerful field-glasses, through which the forms of the retiring foe could be dimly distinguished two or three miles away.

When the opposing forces came to close quarters, though seldom closer than the old-time longest distance range, the crackling of rifles would be heard distinctly, and the drop-

ping of comrades on all sides would tell plainly enough that an active enemy was in front; yet with smokeless powder in use on both sides, and rifle-fire effective at a mile and a half, it was seldom indeed that the British Tommy caught sight of a Boer; while the latter was invariably firing at that "khaki blur" across the fair face of the veldt, trusting to chance to find a billet for his bullet beneath one of those ugly uniforms. And when advancing to a charge through the thick of a desperate battle,—the long rifle-rolls and lyddite thunders oddly contrasting with the entire absence of smoke,—what a sad lack of the old-time enthusiasm prevailed while men cautiously crawled up the sides of one of those natural fortifications, the kopjes, without a note from a bugle, the single beat of a drum, or even the inspiring sight of a flag to nerve the survivors onward!

A Typical Group of Boer Women with their Brother, Taken near Bloemfontein.

Even the cavalry, once the most brilliant and picturesque arm of the service, was now relegated to the sole occupation of executing flanking movements, with no intention of engaging the enemy. The old-time cavalry charges have become a thing of the past, for in the very few instances in which they were made it was clearly shown to be mere murder to send a body of horsemen galloping against the deadly hail of the Mauser or the utterly demoralizing and annihilating rapid-fire of the Maxim and the "pom-pom."

With the advent of the so-called "civilized warfare," and the total elimination of permitted pillage or looting, the strongest passion and incentive of war, next to the love of fighting itself, is swept away, and the modern army becomes reduced to a mere emotionless machine. Only one thing more need be subtracted from war—the noise; and then, when the bullet speeds silently on its mission, when the lyddite bomb breaks gently to dissolve its poisonous vapors, and neither leave the slightest trace of the direction or distance from which they come, then indeed will the last feature, except slaughter, of the old-time wars have passed away.

So in this Anglo-Boer contest we see war robbed of all its romance—campaigning among veldt and kopje, great armies without uniform marching drearily without music, fighting battles without smoke, making desperate assaults without flags, and achieving conquest without pillage. Since nearly three hundred thousand Englishmen have been sent to South Africa to oppose what at the most amounted to less than forty thousand Boers, and later became reduced to less than fifteen thousand, while the comparative strength of the two armies gradually changed from two to one to twenty to one, we may safely add that history will tell of British victory without glory and of Boer defeat without shame.

In this strange South African land, as its material development progressed and its different parts slowly grew into closer contact with each other through railways, telegraphs and newspaper distribution, far-seeing statesmen began to perceive the gradual arousing and growth of the instinct of national consciousness. The different peoples came to realize that they had much in common, and encouraged by scheming politicians at home and the example of our own country abroad, the desire for federation among the

colonies with the little isolated republics in the North grew until it became a passion not only with the Boers proper, but even more with the descendants of other nationalities composing the Afrikander element and a few of the Uitlanders who had lived long enough in the country to have learned to love it as their own. For a while this was encouraged by men like Cecil Rhodes, and it was not until

Kaffir Diamond Diggers expelled from Kimberley during the siege – sent to the Boer lines, and re-expelled to the English lines—at General Gatacre's Headquarters. The English furnished them with supplies and employed them in repairing the railways.

Rhodes realized that the anti-English element was too strong to allow of his becoming, as he had fondly dreamed, the first President of the United States of South Africa, that he allowed a policy to be adopted which led on to the shameful Jameson raid. That raid showed England's hand, and from that time the Boers began to arm and prepare for the inevitable conflict. This movement naturally began with, and developed greatest strength among, the in-

land Boers, who through two hundred years had learned to distrust and fiercely hate the British, who had driven them back from the fertile and beautiful coast line, across the dreadful Karroo Desert, to the semi-barren lands of the high veldt; but it also found a hearty echo and earnest support among the people of Cape Colony and of Natal. The plottings and schemings went on, for these people had read the history of our own struggle for liberty and independence against the same power, they had come to idealize and idolize our country and its institutions, they dreamed of duplicating America in South Africa, counted on our moral sympathy and support, and unquestionably expected with confidence some substantial assistance from us when the crisis should arrive.

Meanwhile, after years of frantic appeal from loyal subjects of the Queen, and after the election of a Boer majority in the Cape Parliament, the British government became aroused, and after pushing troops and supplies close up to the frontier and putting an army on the sea *en route* for the Cape, her ministers adopted a diplomatic tone shrewdly calculated to force hostilities, and succeeded in compelling the Boers to take a technical initiative in opening the war. The subsequent events have been of too recent occurrence and have received too much publicity to make comment necessary at this time.

The following narrative will be at times extremely personal, but I wish to impress upon the reader's mind the idea that, rather than being my own story, it is that of an American, a disinterested observer with natural feelings of sympathy with both sides, whose privilege it has been to be in the thick of the struggle with both armies, and who realizes that the subjective parts of his experiences are not among the least in interest to his readers.

One thing more: this is a close view of South Africa and

the war. It was not my privilege to obtain the general perspective of operations which a hundred daily newspaper reports from every scene of action brought to the eye of the British and American public. This does not in any sense pretend to be a history of the war; merely a narrative of personal experiences and observations, which I hope may prove deserving of attention and worthy of interest.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE KLONDYKE TO CAPE TOWN.

LATE in June, 1898, about eight hundred miles from the mouth of the Yukon River in Alaska, two disgusted gold-seekers were completing a twenty-five-hundred-mile trip down that great river, having traversed the entire gold-bearing strip of the country. They were seated in a small row-boat, bearing the euphonious name of *Klondyke Sucker*, registered No. 2117, which a week before had capsized, spilling the entire possessions of the two argonauts, including their gold-dust, into the yellow flood. Since then it had been raining dismally, and it was to continue doing so for three weeks longer. Blankets and clothing were wet and refused to dry. Over a small fire in half a barrel of sand on the bottom of the boat were cooked the beans and bacon obtained from a friendly steamboat; also the sportive "king" salmon obtained daily from the half Indian, half Esquimaux natives, by bartering pieces of soap from a small box saved from the wreck. Between meals the fire was covered with wet wood for the double purpose of drying the fuel and of making a smudge of smoke to drive away the great clouds of terrible Yukon mosquitoes which at times fairly cast a shadow over the boat.

It was late in the season, and as the last steamers might leave St. Michael's harbor for Seattle any day, the boat was kept drifting on the four-mile current day and night, increasing the perils of the trip, yet saving all-important time. The day was divided into two shifts of ten hours each, the two men, of whom I was one, taking turns at sleeping and

guiding the boat. The remaining four hours were spent in cooking, eating and conversation. During one of these intermissions my partner, Gene, was looking over a comparatively recent magazine number which had come into our possession. Pausing at one page, he read a paragraph silently, and then handed the magazine to me, saying,

"Here, Fred, I guess this about strikes us."

I read the lines indicated, and my mind went back up the river and over the trail to the day I landed at Dyea, with two partners, all three of us victims of the "Black Death," or cerebro-spinal meningitis. Then followed the dreary days in the trail hospital; the death of my two partners; the loss of my money and outfit; my painful first trip over the Chilkoot Pass, a wreck physically and financially; my meeting with Gene; the making of our small fortune during three months on the trail; then the six-hundred-mile river trip to Dawson City and the gold-fields; the disappointment there; the departure for new fields; the loss of our outfit; and the weeks of helpless suffering during this, our frantic effort to escape from that frozen hell. This is what Gene had read and passed to me:

"Persons who have sympathy to spare after feeling for the Cuban reconcentrados, Spain, ourselves, and all sufferers by war, pestilence and famine, are invited to bestow some of their surplus on persons of an adventurous disposition who went months ago to the Klondyke under the impression that there would be more excitement, peril, discomfort and general devilment up there this spring than anywhere else on earth. How these restless enthusiasts will feel when they discover that war has been hatched in the tropics in their absence is something for the imaginative to try to picture. The men who are Klondykers for business reasons will doubtless be thankful that a counter-attraction has developed to draw off the crowd that threatened to swarm all

over the new gold country, but those who went largely for sport or in search of material for stories will grieve and worry. There is something exhilarating in being on the spot of earth that all the world is looking at, but to have toiled and starved and frozen and fought to reach that spot, and then to find all the world looking another way, is very like the sarcasm of destiny."

Gene was right; it did strike us; but we kept our mouths shut and our boat straight for two weeks longer, and reached St. Michael's harbor safely. Here we parted company, Gene going back up the river "piling wood" on a river boat, while I returned to the States on an ocean steamer as a stowaway, and succeeded in landing without detection. Then I went home, where the reaction from exposure, "Black Death," dysentery, scurvy, typhoid, and Yukon cough, which had been incidental to my Alaskan trip, robbed me of health and ambition for a year.

Nevertheless, I had a good constitution, inherited from many generations of careful livers, so the fall of 1899 found me restless and anxious to "hit the trail" again, and until the war-clouds broke over the Transvaal I had been looking toward the Philippines. Fearing that again I might "find the world looking in the other direction," I changed my plans and decided in favor of South Africa.

But here I came face to face with a great difficulty. To go to the Philippines was easy enough, for it required only enlistment in the army. South Africa was another matter, and my resources were extremely slender. While still pondering this problem I chanced to pick up a copy of Rudyard Kipling's "The Light that Failed," and read with deep interest the opening chapters of the story of the young artist who became a war correspondent. In the second chapter I read the lines—

"There were many correspondents with many corps and

columns—from the veterans who had followed on the heels of the cavalry that occupied Cairo in '82, what time Arabi Pasha called himself king, who had seen the first miserable work around Suakim, when the sentries were cut up nightly and the scrub swarmed with spears, to youngsters jerked into the business at the end of a telegraph wire to take the place of their betters killed or invalided."

I read on, mechanically, many pages, my mind following a train of thought suggested by that paragraph. Then I read the entire book, and closed it with the determination to go to South Africa as a War Correspondent. The expression, "youngsters jerked into the business at the end of a telegraph wire to take the place of their betters killed or invalided," told me that if I could not get sent to the front by a home paper I would stand a chance of getting an opportunity by going there anyway, and after that my future would depend on my own abilities. My Alaska experience was the foundation of my assurance, and I went about the business with the spirit outlined in "A Message for Garcia."

Irish Brigade marching down Adderly Street, Cape Town. Post Office in background.

I visited every newspaper office in New York and Philadelphia, saw the proper persons when I could, and told them of my qualifications and experiences. I failed utterly to get any encouragement. All that resulted from my efforts were two brief letters from a Sunday editor and a newspaper "syndicate," agreeing to receive any copy I might send them from the front and to pay for it, "*if used.*"

Every would-be correspondent is familiar with those two detestable words. Then I borrowed one hundred and sixty dollars and sailed for Liverpool on a twelve-day boat. This was in the third week of November, 1899, and my fellow-passengers on the *Waesland* were betting even money that Ladysmith and Kimberley would be relieved before we landed, and declaring that the war would be over before I could reach Cape Town. Worse still, they utterly refused to believe that I was anything like a war correspondent.

Then followed five days in London, where I saw more newspaper people, was refused a war license at the War Office, and was strongly advised by the few friends I had acquired that my plan was "no good," and that I had better follow other men who had come over with the same idea, and go back home again. My failure at the War Office was specially depressing, for I had hoped to get a license, which I had reason to believe would secure me transportation to Table Bay on a military transport; and I had also heard that when the British army accept a man as a war correspondent he becomes their guest; he is provided for as are the military attachés representing the other powers, and is at no expense except for wines and cigars—things which I decided to do without.

I discovered that I should need a camera, so I spent twenty dollars for one, of American design, which I could have bought in the United States for half the money. On the evening of the fifth day I crept into my bunk on another slow boat, this time for Cape Town, I having used half of my remaining funds for a third-class ticket. This was on the 11th of December, and the papers of that morning had contained the account of General Gatacre's reverse at Stormberg and the capture of six hundred of his men by the Boers. This was the first real encouragement I had received—not that I was a partisan in any sense

of the word, but because it demonstrated that my opinion that the war would be stubbornly contested by the Boers was correct. I believed that the conflict would be long-protracted, and that was why I thought it worth while to see it.

My plans at this time were somewhat vague. I intended to make a last effort to connect, as per Kipling, with a newspaper at Cape Town. Failing in this, I hoped in some-way to get to the front and see some actual fighting. As a last alternative, if nothing better offered, I intended to find my way through the lines to the Boer army and join the first body of Americans I should find among them. The presentation of my American passport would prevent misunderstandings, and I felt certain that, incidentally, there would be opportunities for taking photographs of much interest.

The Sussex Regiment marching down Adderly Street, Cape Town. The Grand Hotel in the background.

The voyage to Table Bay lasted nearly four weeks. For a few days, until we had crossed the Bay of Biscay, the rough seas kept everybody below deck. My steamer, the *Australasian*, was a freighter, and only carried passengers as an accommodation—a few third-class and still fewer first-class. There was no second cabin. There were only sixteen male passengers and half a dozen women. Our accommodations were crowded, but clean and comfortable —about thirty bunks in one room between decks in the forward part of the boat, with three small tables, seating six each, at one side. We kept our baggage in the lower berths

and slept in the upper ones; mine, fortunately, had a port-hole, giving ample light and fresh air—both desirable when fifteen men are sleeping, eating and living in one cabin.

We were a cosmopolitan lot. I was the only American, though four of my fellow-travellers had been in the United States. One of the company had been a fur hunter and trapper in the Rockies, another was a telegraph and cable operator, a third had been a Texan cow-puncher, while the fourth was a South American adventurer who had served in half a dozen different armies and taken part in a dozen Central and South American rebellions. Several had been gold miners, and fully half had already been in South Africa, some having taken part in the bloody "native" wars of a dozen years before. Then there were a few sickly-looking clerks from London, several emigrants to Australia bent on sheep-raising, and, quite unique among the rest, a rich old Scotch merchant from Edinburgh, taking an economical sea voyage for his health. He tried hard to be "one of the boys," but failed dismally. Most of the party were going to South Africa to fight. Having failed to secure enlistment in desired corps at London, they intended to make the coveted connections at Cape Town. A few hoped to take advantage of the bustle and increased activity at the Cape to obtain employment; all hoped to make their fortunes during the great "boom" which was to begin in the gold-fields immediately after the end of the war. It was interesting to doze in my berth and listen to their talk. English dialect and Western slang harmonized musically, and tales of war and peace crossed one another before reaching my bunk. A piratical-looking fellow, with a broad yellow sash and a long stiletto, told tales of Moulmein and Mandalay that made me think of Kipling's "Burmah girl," while the old Scotch merchant crept off to his

closed berth in the corner to nip his whiskey alone, never dreaming of passing the bottle.

Quite unexpectedly the *Australasian* stopped for a few hours at Teneriffe, the capital city of the Canary Islands, where with a party of the other passengers I went ashore, and strolled about until my steps brought me to the Muscogne Hotel, over which flew the Stars and Stripes, indicating that the American Consul lived there. Having a general letter of introduction from Secretary of State John Hay to the entire American diplomatic and consular service (a favor obtained through the courtesy of Senator Penrose), I decided that the consulate at Teneriffe would be a good place to try this letter and find out just what the "courtesies" requested in my behalf might be. I entered the hotel, asked for the "Consul Amerique," presented my letter, received "the glad hand," and promptly accepted the hospitable official invitation to dinner. I found Consul Berliner a capital fellow and a credit to the department. The dinner was quite as much so. The hotel, while pretending to be English, was very Spanish. The other guests were about half Spanish and half English. With the exception of the Consul, I had the honor of being the only American on the island. The Englishmen present were very quiet and had little to say, for a cablegram had just been received from the Cape telling of General Buller's reverse at Tugela and giving his official report. The Spanish

Troopship Assaye. Cape Town Docks.

were in high spirits; in fact they made every English reverse the occasion of much merriment and rejoicing. The Consul was diplomatically neutral, and, taking my cue from him, so was I. I was greatly pleased to note that the late unpleasantness between America and Spain did not have any effect on my treatment by the Spaniards at Teneriffe. The men were courteous with the traditional Spanish dignity, through which I was unable to detect any aversion, while the charm of the ladies was such that I am sure, had they defended San Juan, the Rough Riders would have rushed up the hill to surrender even faster than they did to conquer.

The remainder of the voyage was uneventful. Christmas and New Year's day were celebrated by appropriate extensions of the usually monotonous menu and the contribution of bottled beer by the captain. We drank his health, the Queen's and the President's, nearly everybody else's of importance, and each others'. Then we went to our bunks to digest and sleep, after which there were athletic contests on deck, followed by dreary singing, accompanied by deplorably unskillful "vamping" on the small and rickety deck-piano brought up for the occasion. Then another storm, more sea-sickness, and at last Cape Town.

CHAPTER III.

GETTING A WAR LICENSE UNDER DIFFICULTIES—THE FIRST COUP.

I LANDED with exactly seven guineas in my purse, equivalent to about thirty-six dollars in American money, and I made the securing of a boarding-place my first duty. I went to a cheap hotel with my baggage, and then putting on my best clothes, in order to properly play the part of "a distinguished American journalist," I called on Colonel J. G. Stowe, U. S. Consul General for South Africa, to whom I had strong letters of introduction. The Colonel gave me a royal welcome, and instinctively I knew that he was a man in whom I could confide. So I told him my whole story down to the thirty-six dollars, now shrunk to thirty-four. Colonel Stowe looked thoughtfully at me for a few moments, and then rapidly wrote a letter which he handed to me, saying, "Take this to the Censor's office and he will give you a press license that will enable you to draw rations, and you can go to the front at once, where it won't cost you anything to live. That will keep you going until money begins to come from the articles you write. No thanks necessary; you'll find the Press Censor at the Castle Barracks. Come and tell me how you make out—good luck to you."

Arriving at the Censor's office, I found a notice posted to the effect that positively no more licenses would be issued to newspaper correspondents. Ignoring the notice I went in and presented my letter, which was one of introduction, requesting a license. Major Evans, P. C. (Press Censor),

politely but firmly called my attention to the notice on the door, and regretted his inability to do anything for me, naming, as a comforter, several distinguished men who also had been refused. I sadly left the office and returned to the Consul's office. Colonel Stowe could do nothing more. Then I realized that war correspondence on the accredited plan was out of the question, so I spent the remainder of the day looking for a cheaper lodging, in preparation for a long period of profitless waiting. The next morning I moved into new quarters, a boarding-house filled with refugees from the Rand, Englishmen, or sympathizers with their cause, expelled from the Transvaal by the Boers at the beginning of the war. They were a hard lot, but very interesting. The house was unique—two-storied, with deep and broad verandas in front covered with wicker chairs, in which the forty-odd boarders spent most of the warm afternoons dozing or discussing the war. The furnishings were crude, but the parlor and dining-room were gorgeous with hundreds of gilt-framed chromos and paper flowers in profusion. Small curios, corals, shells, skins and horns, photographs and sofa-cushions were piled in every chair and corner of the parlor, while the dining-room and hallway were equally stuffy; yet the whole effect was delightful, creating an atmosphere of civilized barbarity, semi-Bohemian, odd, grotesque; in all, unique. The landlady was rough but kind-hearted, the meals were good and well served, and the terms were

Horse Mart on Parade Square, Capetown.

one pound per week, payable in advance—strictly no credit.

After noon I called again at the Censor's office to make a few inquiries, but found him still obdurate. Then I hunted up the office of the Principal Medical Officer, and volunteered my services as a stretcher-bearer, adding that I was a correspondent who had been refused a license, and that I wanted to see something of the fighting, preferring the ambulance service to enlisting, as I would have more certainty of seeing actual fighting in that department.

The P. M. O., as he was called, was a kind looking old

Rand Refugees Camping on the Sand at East London after expulsion from the Transvaal at the beginning of the War.

gentleman, who became interested at once in the young American who had come ten thousand miles to see the war, but told me that he could not possibly accept my services. Then he asked who refused to issue my license, and when I answered he said, "You went to the wrong man. Major Evans has no authority; he is only a clerk. Go to Colonel Trotter, Chief of Staff; he is in supreme command here, and can issue you a pass if he cares to. I wish you success." Colonel Stowe gladly gave me a letter to Colonel Trotter, and as I knew that the Chief of Staff and the P. M. O. probably stopped at the same hotel, I waited until the next day,

hoping that they would meet at dinner or during the evening, when the kindly P. M. O. might happen to mention the matter. Something of this kind must have happened, for the next morning, when I called on the Chief of Staff, he was extremely courteous, and promptly wrote an order to the Press Censor to issue me a license. When I saw that officer and presented the order he was plainly annoyed, told me it was evidently a mistake, and asked me to call the next day.

Artist and War Correspondent Mortimer Menpes, of "Black and White," examining a Lee-Metford Rifle.

Oscillation between hope and despair was becoming unbearable; but there was no help for it, and it seemed weeks before the arrival of the appointed hour. The following afternoon at four o'clock I made my last call on the Censor. A magical change had come over him, and he was affability personified. "It is very irregular, you know," he said, "but you Americans seem to get everything you want." Then he asked to see the credentials from my paper. This was what I had feared. However,

I produced my two letters, which he threw down after a glance, saying, "These won't answer at all. You will have to cable to your paper for proper recognition." This I knew would be folly, for they would not answer. The situation was critical. Having all to gain and nothing to lose, I decided to be a little independent. So I replied,

"I have no authority to use the cable in my correspondence; I am writing descriptive articles only and taking photographs. If, however, you desire it, I will write and have the credentials mailed to you; and, meanwhile, if I am assigned to some force at the front, I will be where you can reach me if they don't come." The Major hesitated, so I added, "If I fail to receive this license I will be compelled to go up the east coast to Delagoa Bay, enter the Transvaal, and then there will be simply one more American correspondent writing pro-Boer articles for American papers."

Then the Major decided to give me the desired license. I signed a printed form binding me to abide by certain rules, and I received the precious bit of paper, which assigned me to General Gatacre's division. The Major wrote "Provisional" across the top, and added, "If I fail to receive your credentials within two months your license will be recalled, and you will be brought down from the front under guard."

I was not much impressed by this remark, for I felt that it was a "bluff," and that the Major would forget all about it in much less time. In fact, he was removed from Cape Town to another command soon afterward, and his successor never knew anything about the matter. I drew my pen twice through the word "Provisional," and wiped that part out of existence so far as I was concerned. Consul General Stowe heartily congratulated me on my success, and a few hours later the railway authorities issued me a

general railway pass on presentation of my military license.

All this was brilliantly successful; but there was one drawback. The license contained a clause reading, "He is authorized to draw rations for himself and one servant and forage for one horse, *on payment.*" On inquiry, I learned that the rations would cost five shillings per diem, payable weekly in advance. The forage for the horse would be the same, but that didn't bother me. I myself was the obstacle, with my healthy appetite and regular habits of eating.

Mr. Cecil Rhodes boarding the S. S. *Norman* for England, March, 1900, after the relief of Kimberley.

Evidently, I had to find some way of raising money if I were to follow the campaign for any period. After consultation with the Consul I wrote a letter stating the particulars, which he endorsed with his signature, to one of the papers which had given me a letter, and offered them a fully accredited correspondent in the field for the minimum amount on which I could exist, namely, twenty dollars per week, and requested that my acceptance be cabled with a substantial money-order. This I mailed, and, knowing that even a cable reply would take over a month to reach me, I began to make new plans as to how to exist till then on what resources I had remaining; these resources amounted to four days' board (already paid for) and twenty dollars in cash.

My first duty was to look around for some quiet, inexpensive place in the country, where I could wait until I re-

ceived further credentials and money from America. I had not the slightest doubt that my offer of "a correspondent in the field" would be accepted, but I counted on a month of inactivity. As I still had four days' credit with my landlady, I spent the next few days looking around Cape Town. With its sixty thousand inhabitants; its fine buildings, some of them eight stories high, equipped with express elevators; its well-paved streets, traversed by trolley lines; its luxurious hotels, on the piazzas of which I spent much of the time; its handsome churches; its tastefully dressed women

Squad of London City Imperial Volunteers at Cape Town.

thronging the streets on shopping days and filling the aisles of up-to-date department stores—I frankly admit I was greatly surprised, for I had vaguely imagined South Africa a kind of magnified zoological garden, where the white inhabitants carried rifles to protect themselves from the wild animals and natives. Without exception, Cape Town is surrounded by the most beautiful suburbs I have ever seen —little one-story houses, whitewashed, and encircled by broad verandas; veritable architectural jewels, encased in a setting of trees, shrubbery and vines, brilliant with gay-

colored flowers, occupied by cool-looking, white-dressed people, who seemed to be enjoying a continual vacation from work and worry. Through the centre of the town the municipal gardens stretch, flanked by a magnificent avenue of thick, high trees a mile or more up the slope, ending at the very foot of Table Mountain, which rises abruptly nearly four thousand feet above the bay, flat-topped and cloud-lined, a landmark for a hundred miles. Half an hour by train brings one to Muisenberg, the fashionable seaside resort, where unsurpassed sea-bathing may be enjoyed. The same time on the trolley brings one to Grootschure, Cecil Rhodes' home and semi-public gardens, filled with a large variety of zoological specimens, a favorite Mecca for holiday pleasure-seekers.

On the outskirts of the city thousands of khaki-clothed soldiers were encamped, fatigue details trailing off through the streets of Cape Town, the scarlet coats of the very few in dress uniform giving a slight touch of the military color I had expected to find at this great base of operations. The prevalence of khaki robbed this of most of its brilliancy and of its romance; yet a few of the Tommies managed to look very smart, and found plenty of flaxen-haired maidens to ogle and flirt with in the crowded streets. Up at the foot of Table Mountain, at the end of the Gardens Avenue, is the palatial Mount Nelson Hotel, built to cater for the diamond and gold millionaires from the North, the accommodations of which were at that time taxed to their utmost by the throngs of aristocratic officers, with their wives, sisters and sweethearts who had followed the army thus far. The persistent absence from the front of many of these officers "on leave" became quite a scandal until the arrival of Lord Kitchener, who stalked through the corridors one day asking the idlers in uniform why they had nothing to do, and suggesting that at his next meeting he

would "find them some occupation;" whereupon the red-collared khakis vanished, the scandals ceased, and the ladies languished. Yes, "Lord Kitchener is a brute."

Lord Roberts and his famous Chief of Staff arrived the day after I secured my license. If they had come the day before, this tale would have been very different, for Lord Kitchener at once put his mailed hand on the necks of the newspaper contingent, and much writhing and squirming ensued. I found time during these days to visit a Huguenot seminary at Wellington, sixty miles out in the grape country, where I regaled myself with luscious fruit, but found that the person to whom my letter of introduction was addressed had returned to America a month before. This institution was another revelation, for I was informed that its principal supporters were the back-country Boers, who, contrary to the general impression created abroad by the British, spared neither time nor expense in the education of their sons and daughters.

The local newspapers were not lacking in enterprise. Naturally, in a city half full of Boer sympathizers, surrounded and occupied by Imperial troops, every bit of news from the front was eagerly looked for. As each new telegram from the front arrived an "extra" of "dodger" size, eight by ten inches, was issued from the newspaper offices. While the presses were still running, the engineer would open the whistle-valve and an agonizing scream would pierce every ear for miles around. Then windows and doors opened and heads protruded, followed by half the body. Men and boys, hatless and coatless, tumbled out, rushing like mad down town, every alley and street vomiting its contribution to the dense mob which assailed the newspaper offices in a mad fight for the penny extras;—a splendid speculation for the proprietors. Then the crowd would break up and disperse, streaked with swift-

running newsboys selling copies to the laggards, all reading, as they slowly returned to work or went to meals, the intelligence that Kimberley was or was not relieved, that the situation at Ladysmith was unchanged;—reading, perhaps, long lists of killed and wounded, the news being joyful or the reverse according to the sympathies of the reader. During the humdrum intervals between the specials, the monotony was occasionally relieved by a few regiments marching through the streets on their way to the front; or perhaps a small crowd would collect to watch a mammoth traction engine round a sharp corner, drawing nine or ten heavily loaded trucks like a train of cars, each turning the corner and following in the tracks of its predecessor with the precision of a goods-train on steel tracks.

Cronje's Guns from the captured Laager at Paardeburg. Procession on Adderly Street, Cape Town.

My favorite lounging-place, thanks to kind hospitality, was the office of the American Consul, who, however busy, always had time to swing around in his chair, give me a kindly greeting, open a box of cigars, and wave his hand toward a pile of the newest home papers—a month old, but ever welcome. Here I met Captain Slocum, the American military attaché; Howard Hillegas, author of "Oom Paul's People;" Mackern, of "Scribner's Magazine;" the Hon. Webster Davis, just beginning his extraordinary career in behalf of the Boers; and half a dozen of the more prominent Rand Americans, engineers and operators, who, with characteristic American humor, styled

~~Permissions~~

Form of Licence for Newspaper Correspondents.

No. of Licence. 16A

F. W. Unger

having signed the Declaration attached to the Rules for Newspaper Correspondents accompanying Troops in the Field, is hereby licensed to act as Correspondent for the

"Philadelphia Press" ×

with the ~~Force in~~ under Genl Sir W. F. Gatacre

dated at Cape Town and Orange River Cony

this 8th day of January 1900

17/2/00

× And also for Rochetto Daily Mail - Grahamstown. Bayot Major

He is authorised to draw Rations for himself and one servant, and forage for one horse on payment.

P.C. Cape Town

H. L. Emmanuel Capt

19.1.1900. S. O. Fort Hutchinson

BY ORDER.

H. J. Evans Major Press Censor.

Author's War License issued at Cape Town.

themselves "poor refugees, roughing it at the Mount Nelson Hotel."

With a supreme effort, and on the advice of Consul Stowe and Mr. Hillegas, I broke away from the fascination of all this, deciding to go at once to the front, and to General Gatacre's headquarters, spend my spare time there, see something of the country, write a few articles, and then return a month later for the reply by cable to my letters sent to America.

Late in the afternoon, before I left Cape Town, I saw an open carriage pass my boarding-place drawn by two beautiful, swift-trotting horses. The livery of the footmen and the crest on the carriage-door I recognized as being those of Sir Alfred Milner, Governor of Cape Colony. Seated in the carriage were a gentleman and a lady; on the opposite seat a little child. The man wore heavy spectacles and had very dark eyebrows. He seemed to see everything on both sides of the street at a glance. Though I had never seen him before, I recognized him from his pictures as Rudyard Kipling, whose arrival the papers of the day before had announced.

I frankly confess that as the carriage turned the corner I envied Mr. Kipling all he had acquired, and then drowsily passed into a series of day-dreams and air-castle building, little thinking what an important factor Mr. Kipling was destined to become in helping me to get on in South Africa. At nine o'clock I entrained for De Aar, four hundred miles north, and gratefully found that my free pass included bedding in a first-class compartment.

CHAPTER IV.

OFF TO THE FRONT.

EARLY the following morning I was awakened by the guard calling us to breakfast. The train had stopped at Matjesfontein, and while the other passengers went into the station restaurant, I opened a package of lunch I had provided for myself and ate alone. Then I walked up and down the long platform, smoking a cigar and watching the other passengers, the Tommies on guard, and the officers idling about, until, after three-quarters of an hour's wait, the train moved on again.

As the sun ascended higher the day grew warmer, and one by one the other passengers in my compartment divested themselves of their coats, waistcoats and shirts, and we sat as though in a hot oven, the wind blowing in through the open windows as a blast from a furnace. The train ran along drearily about fifteen miles an hour. We were in the great Karroo desert. On each side of the track the country stretched flat, dry and grey, the only vegetation being a few dried-up bushes. Now and then we rattled over a bridge crossing the dry bed of a small stream or river. At each of these places there was a little camp with a company or so of soldiers on guard, for a rising in the colony was feared, and the first move would be to blow up all the railway bridges. Far away on the horizon the faint outlines of mountains could be seen, shining whitely in the sun against the grey-blue background. Then towards afternoon we passed a few conical kopjes, which soon increased in number and size until for

several hours we were passing through a canyon like that of the Colorado, with just such a small river running alongside. As evening closed in, it grew cold and chilly.

At daylight next morning the train was standing still, and I was told we had arrived at De Aar, which Kipling has said is "the land of lies." De Aar is a railway junction, contains a handsome station between the parallel tracks, and is surrounded by half a hundred or more small houses, mostly built of corrugated sheet-iron. A few

Boer Farm in Cape Colony, near Cape Town.

thousand troops were camped about the outskirts of the village, and the entire country was buried ankle-deep in a fine, powdery dust, slightly alkaline. Not a blade of grass was to be seen. A few trees shaded the fronts of most of the houses, but they were white with this same fine dust, which penetrated every portion of car, house and station; crept into one's baggage, sifted into food at meals, lined our collars and got inside our clothes; intruded its presence into every inappropriate place; made men profane and dirty, and altogether stamped itself irrevocably on our

memories as being "khaki," which in truth is an Eastern word whose translation is "dirt."

Stepping out of the car, I was addressed by an officer with a request for my pass. On producing my license I was directed to the commandant's office, where that gentleman informed me that I should have continued southward with the rest of the train, which had left my car standing on a siding at midnight. I told him I intended

The veteran War Correspondent and Artist, Frederick Villiers, of the "Illustrated London News," and Artist F. Wilkinson, of the Sydney "Daily Telegraph," at De Aar, base of supplies for Lord Methuen, Cape Colony.

to go on to Modder River, and he replied that my license was made out for General Gatacre's army, and that only the commanding officer at Modder River could give me permission to proceed thence. As this was the column attempting to relieve Kimberley, and I was anxious to see the camp and meet the correspondents there, I wired at once. Late that afternoon I received a courteous reply, regretting the General's inability to comply with my re-

quest. Meanwhile, in possession of a twenty-four-hours' pass to remain at De Aar, issued by the commandant, I wandered about the town. Being forbidden to visit the camps, the only places of interest, in despair I went to church for half an hour.

But it was too hot to stay there, so I left the sweltering congregation of civilians, with a few officers, and went to the only hotel in the place. On the way I heard a man say, "There goes Villiers, the war correspondent." I immediately asked him to point out Villiers to me, and a minute later introduced myself to that gentleman. A more courteous reception I have never had. I accepted his invitation to dinner, and spent the rest of the day with him and Mr. Wilkinson, another artist, from Australia. Mr. Villiers gave me lots of advice, gleaned from his twenty years of experience; prominent among which, as he helped me a third time to meat, was, "You never know when you will get your next meal in this business, so make it a point to always eat two or three at once when you get the chance, so as to have a few stored away in case of need." By following this advice during the following months I maintained my strength and health, while a dozen or more of my companions collapsed under the strain, and either spent weeks in the hospital or were forced to retire from the field altogether.

That evening I slept on a pile of hospital bedding at the station, and the guard woke me at two o'clock to take the train to Naauport Junction, another hundred miles away, southeast. From this point I had hoped to get a train to Sterkstrom, a hundred miles farther east; but as the Boers had destroyed the railway, I was compelled to go on nearly two hundred miles farther south to Graham's Town, where a post-cart crossed the desert to King William's Town, the beginning of a branch connecting with the railway run-

ning from East London on the coast to General Gatacre's headquarters.

Arriving at Graham's Town in the evening, the length of my journey being about that of from Paris to Rome, I quickly found a respectable boarding-house, where I spent the night. In the morning I made inquiries, and found that the post-cart only ran once or twice a week, that the charge was three pounds, that the distance was eighty-five miles, and that people had been known to "walk it." After calling at the local newspaper offices I had a luncheon prepared, and at four o'clock in the afternoon started on my tramp with a small bundle.

The road led out of town over a high hill. To my surprise, on reaching its summit, I found myself on a level plain of fine turf, with a few herds of cattle scattered about. The next eight miles was ideal golfing ground. Then I noticed the road turned to the left, while the telegraph line ran across country and over a hill. Judging that it would come back to the road, I followed the wires, and after half an hour saw the road again. A mile or so away was a building, presumably a hotel. I was in a large field enclosed by wire fencing. A few ostriches were walking about. Suddenly a huge black fellow spied me, and after a moment's hesitation started toward me with a ridiculous dancing gait. I promptly made for the fence, reaching it just in time, with the bird stamping furiously close behind. Diving through the wires, I picked myself up and made a few sarcastic remarks to his lordship, which he evidently failed to appreciate. When I reached the road again I decided not to take any more short cuts. The ostrich, with its horn-like front toe, has been known to completely disembowel a man; and the cocks, especially at this, the hatching time, are very dangerous.

After a glass of milk at the hotel I continued my walk

in the dark for another ten miles, the last two of which were down a continuous slope between high mountains, called Pluto's Vale, the scene of an extremely bloody native war many years before.

Then, being tired, and the moon being heavily obscured by dark clouds, I stepped aside a few yards into the bush, and with my bundle for a pillow lay down for a few hours' sleep. Toward daylight I was awakened by the rumbling of wagon-wheels, and, jumping up, saw a heavy cart passing,

Pluto's Vale, Scene of a Bloody Native War. A bit of an eighty-nine-mile walk.

drawn by ten span of bullocks. Running after it, I climbed in behind, made friends with the Kaffir in charge, gave him some tobacco, and continued my sleep on a pile of empty sacks, which poorly broke the terrific jolting over the stony road.

In three hours the cart stopped, the driver outspanned his bullocks, turning them loose to graze near a small rain-pond, and I set out walking again. By keeping this up, alternately sleeping on bullock carts and walking, I man-

aged to make forty-five miles the first day. Stopping at a hotel, I ordered a heavy meal, and found, to my surprise, a tennis court and several very pretty colonial girls of distinct English type, well educated, and dressed in a style only a year behind that of London. Then I continued on, as before.

Three mountain ranges and two rivers were crossed. Hotels were passed every twenty miles. Watering places

General Gatacre welcoming General Brabant on his arrival at Sterkstrom.

were ten to fifteen miles apart, and sometimes I grew very thirsty before they were reached. The brush was thick with cactus and thorn-bush. A few ostrich farms were scattered about, but for the most part the road trailed carelessly through fenceless wastes over which some colonies of baboons occasionally scampered. Tennis courts were at every hotel, and I was told the farmers from twenty miles about gather at these, with their women, every Saturday

afternoon, oddly contrasting with the surrounding wilderness. I met the post-cart from King William's Town, a huge two-wheeled affair seating six persons, and drawn by four horses at a gallop. With frequent relays, the cart makes the trip in one day. I kept going day and night, toward the end of the journey reaching a railway in course of construction, and obtaining a lift for nine miles on a construction train, thus arriving at my destination within two days and four hours after starting. I calculated that by walking I had lost a day and gained three pounds sterling.

A train for the main line left within an hour of my ar-

Divine Services Sunday Morning at General Gatacre's Headquarters at Sterkstrom. Civilian visitors in the foreground.

rival, and by noon the next day, without further adventure, I arrived at Sterkstrom, General Gatacre's headquarters, twenty miles from Stormberg, from which Gatacre had conducted a "masterly retreat," after losing six hundred men, a month before. Captain Tennant, intelligence officer for the Third Division, acting Press Censor, countersigned my license, and at last I was a full-fledged war correspondent, with liberty to roam as I pleased throughout the district commanded by General Gatacre.

Captain Tennant introduced me to two other correspondents, Mr. Sheldon, of the "Cape Argus," and Mr. Swallow, of the "Central News Company" and the "New York

Journal." He was an Australian, and had spent some years in America.

I have always found that a foreigner who has been in the United States is quite a different man from his countrymen who have not had that advantage. He is invariably more open-hearted, generous in feeling and sympathetic, and has acquired the belief of our glorious West that, after all, beneath clothes and caste all men are brothers. So I indulged in confidences with Swallow which would have damned me if told to any of the English officers or correspondents. As a result of this conference, Swallow advised me to temporarily enlist in a company of mounted scouts, where I would be lodged and provided for, and also draw pay of four or five pounds per month, incidentally having ample time and opportunity to gather material and to do some writing.

Consul General Colonel James G. Stowe and family at his residence in the suburbs of Cape Town, Consular Secretary Miller standing.

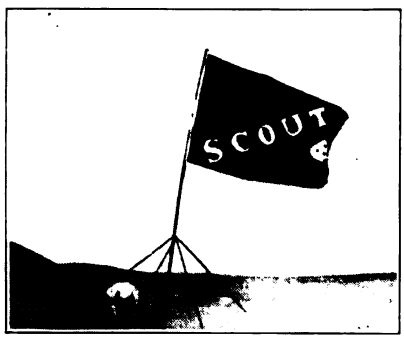
CHAPTER V.

A "SOLDIER OF THE QUEEN" FOR ONE DAY ONLY.

THE prospect of joining Captain De Montmorency's scouts was very seductive. The Captain, who is a V. C. man, has a reputation for being in every fight which comes off. The insignia of the company—a white skull and crossbones on a black field—is sufficiently suggestive to make comment superfluous. I met the Captain at the Press Censor's tent, and after a short talk I wanted to enter service under him. To be sure, it would be somewhat risky, but that was a small matter in comparison to the "copy" I should be able to obtain while out scouting, commandeering Boer horses, and being at the front in every battle or skirmish. Then, too, how fine a thing it would be to go home with the big sombrero, death's-head ribbon and black ostrich-feather on my head! There was also the five shillings per diem pay, which was increased to ten shillings if the volunteer furnished his own horse. All of this and much more was presented to me in an alluring light by the eloquent friend of the Captain, who was helping him recruit and who had suggested the matter to me.

The result of my interview with the Captain was that in the afternoon I visited the scouts' camp to be taken on trial for a day or so. The qualifications were "an ability to ride and shoot well, and to speak both Dutch and Kaffir." The last two were to be waived, provided I would pass the first two. About five o'clock an orderly came up and said, "Captain says you can have his horse now if you want to ride." I had made this request earlier in order to ride

around the camp. While the orderly was tightening the saddle-girths I made a few inquiries, and learned that "the horse was as quiet and gentle as a lamb," and I made the reflection to myself that the lamb referred to was likely a very old and irascible gentleman. I mounted, and then, trying to look as though I really could "ride a tiger if necessary," as I had assured the Captain I could, I gathered the reins in my hand and said "Get up." The brute stood still, and some one laughed. I tried again; the Captain suggested that I dig my "heels into the horse's side." I did so, without effect. Then a lieutenant offered me his spurs, and I dismounted to put them on. When again in the saddle I used the spurs.



Death's-Head Flag of Montmorency's Scouts. "The Death or Glory Boys" under General Gatacre.

The pony did buck a little; then he ran a mile or two out across the veldt, coming around in a circle and hoofing for camp, where he stopped so quickly that I slid half way up his neck. As I went to my tent I overheard one man say, "Well, he stayed on him, anyway," and I felt duly gratified by the compliment.

The next morning we were roused at half-past four, and all of us washed in one bucket of water. My turn was not the first on the list. Then we were ordered "out for drill." I took my place at the end of the line, and when fours were counted I found my number to be "one." The order "Column fours, trot!" was given, and I took my place at the tail of the column alone. An officer shouted

"Move up ahead of the next four," and I tried to do so, but found that the new horse objected. The order was repeated, but not carried out. The Captain rode up and asked what was the matter. I replied that my number was "one" at the end of the line, and that I intended to fall in behind the column alone. "Quite right," said the Captain, and rode off, leaving me in triumph, all through the intelligence of my steed, while the other officers quite ignored the whole affair. Some one handed me a tent-peg, and by its aid I got my animal into motion when the column advanced. Through the remainder of the drill I managed all right, and was even advanced to the position of number three, first fours, to take the place of another unfortunate, who, too, was incompetent. My number here became three, and my duty was to hold the horses of the others when they dismounted to fire. When this occurred I found the horse of an officer also on my hands, and the whole five nearly stampeded with me. However, I kept them together, and finally imagined myself a very Automedon.

After some more manœuvring the Captain ordered the new men "to fall out to the right," and I intuitively knew that the supreme test was about to come. There were half a dozen of us, and the Captain ordered the nearest one to ride out across the veldt as hard as he could go, pass around a bullock-cart half a mile distant, and come back. I fell back a little, raised my stirrups two holes, and waited. I was next to the last, and at the signal from the Captain I thwacked my noble steed's flanks with my tent-peg, and he broke into a gallop. "Faster!" I heard the Captain shout, and I struck the animal on the neck, and the easy gallop quickly became a dead run. I was nearing the bullock-cart; the animal, in response to a pull on the right rein, intended to navigate him around the cart, intelligently turned

to the left, veered around in a semicircle, and headed for camp. I jerked the curb rein, which resulted in a very peculiar motion of his hind-quarters; then I gently slid off, but instead of alighting on my feet I rolled over on my back. I explained to the Captain that the hobnails in my shoes interfered with the free movement of my feet in the stirrups, and also that a scout had warned me to use only the curb bit, which was evidently a mistake; but he only smiled indulgently, and dryly observed, "I am afraid you do not understand these South African horses, you know." I had previously told the Captain that I could ride better than I could shoot; so I realized that once more cruel fate had tricked me into hopeful anticipations, and that again I was a victim of blasted ambition. The above narrative will, I hope, sufficiently explain why, instead of being a "scout," with a black ostrich-feather in my hat and the death's-head hat-band, with five-bob a day, looking for a good horse to commandeer and raise it to ten-bob, with a possible V. C. in the future, I continued to be only an ordinary war correspondent, attached to the headquarters staff.

CHAPTER VI.

AN ARMORED TRAIN RECONNOISSANCE.

THROUGH the courtesy of Captain Tennant I received a pass from General Gatacre to accompany the officer in charge of the armored train during a reconnoissance. This was an exceptional favor, as the armored train is considered a veritable death-trap, and the English army takes particular care not to allow correspondents accompanying its forces in the field to come to harm.

At about 9 A.M. Lieutenant Cosset, in command of the train, signalled the engineer to "go ahead." Captain Tennant, divisional intelligence officer, turned up at the last moment, unexpectedly, to accompany us, which was lucky for me, as he was able to point out many places of interest while Lieutenant Cosset was occupied with his duties.

It was not until we had started that I learned our direction, orders being delivered at the last moment. This caution was necessary, for the reason that Sterkstrom was a hotbed of rebel sympathizers, who, if possible, would warn the enemy of the armored train's prospective movements. Just before starting I took a photograph of the front end of the train, with the Maxim gun showing at the port hole; I was not allowed to photograph the interior. The engine and tender were encased in heavy armor-plate, and sandwiched between two ordinary box-cars protected in the same way. A four-inch aperture for observation and rifle-firing purposes extended entirely around both cars near the top, while sliding doors of armor-plate protected the Maxim guns.

The train's force included about thirty men, in addition to the engine crew, who were non-combatants. I had expected that we would proceed eastward on the Indine line towards Dordrecht, but to my satisfaction, as we moved out of Sterkstrom, Lieutenant Cosset whispered "Molteno" in my ear. This was in the direction of Stormberg, where the battle of that name occurred on December 10, 1899, and Gatacre was defeated with the loss of six hundred men. For the first fifteen miles we were to act as escort to the regular daily passenger train which went as far as Cypher-

Front View of Armored Train Showing Lieutenant Cosset Signalling from Molteno to Cyphergat.

gat, six miles this side of Molteno. Everything went smoothly until the heavy grade up Bushman's Hoek was reached, where the train came to a standstill until the passenger engine behind came to its assistance and pushed us to the summit.

The run on to Cyphergat, three miles farther, occupied only a few minutes. Lieutenant Cosset stopped for additional orders, after which he, with his signal corps, mounted the roof of the car to exchange signals with an outpost on a kopje three miles distant. In ten minutes we were under

way again, going more slowly until we reached Police Camp, the most advanced outpost, about four miles farther on. From here our progress was very slow, for, though the track had been constantly patroled, caution was necessary until Molteno came into view, and we saw the station-master waving a white flag, which showed that at that point at least the line was clear. We then steamed at a more rapid rate to the station, where the two officers and I left the train for dinner at the station restaurant.

Captain Tennant, who had some important matter in hand, left us here, while Lieutenant Cosset and myself ordered dinner. Molteno was neutral territory. The residents were Boer sympathizers, while the British scouts patroled the town constantly. The nearest Boer outpost was about five miles beyond, while from the high kopjes at Stormberg, the enemy's main camp, a full view of the entire country back to Molteno was to be had. Captain Tennant joined us in half an hour, and while we were still eating, an orderly entered with a heliograph despatch for him. After reading it he gave us three minutes to finish eating our eggs; then we ran out and jumped into the armored train. The Captain, of course, being ranking officer, took command, and ordered, "Stand by with rifles ready, in case of accident." The sentries on a kopje behind Molteno had observed about forty Boers creeping up the side of a kopje several miles beyond, and in the direction of Stormberg. The information was signalled back to camp, and then heliographed to Molteno, while a detachment of about twenty of the Cape mounted police was sent out to intercept them. The doors of the armored train were closed and fastened on the inside, and we crept on slowly—about as slowly as a man would walk. The officers swept the country with their field-glasses, occasionally ordering some of the men to keep their eyes on certain spots.

The mounted men were galloping off a mile to our right, toward the position of the enemy. Lieutenant Cosset was carefully watching the track to guard against accident. The Boers had a special hatred for the armored train with its murderous Maxims, and they constantly tampered with the track, spreading the rails, laying mines, and in a hundred clever ways prepared traps, always endeavoring to leave a harmless appearance in order to lead the train into an ambuscade. About a mile and a half out of Molteno, a spot on which I was keeping my glasses fixed developed into a moving object. The sharp eyes of the Captain disentangled the mass into a small body of horsemen riding furiously away.

Fortified Station Building near Cyphergat, at Bushman's Hoek.

This was on the left; the expected attack was to come from the right. On both sides single horsemen were to be seen riding at full speed, while from the tops of the kopjes on both sides we expected to hear the shrill screams of shells from the enemy's concealed batteries, if they were willing to thus disclose their position. We moved on, every man hoping to discover a body of the enemy within rifle or Maxim range. It was my first experience on a man-hunt, and proportionately superior to the excitement of hunting game, as man is superior to any beast. After another mile the patrol turned sharply to the right, leaving the train at their rear. We waited another half hour, and then, as they no longer needed our support, retired to Molteno. It was

not until then that I realized the strain to which we had been subjected. Thoroughly fatigued, I threw myself down to rest. The officers and men, to whom this was an every-day experience, smiled at me, but not disparagingly.

Then we returned to Police Camp, where I accompanied Captain Tennant to the quarters of the advance scouts on top of a kopje half a mile from the railway. From here a commanding view of the neighboring country was to be

Major Nylen, Cape Mounted Police, and Captain Tennant, Third Divisional Intelligence Officer and Press Censor, Heliographing from Cyphergat to Sterkstrom. The mirror reflecting the sun's rays can flash signals eighty miles. The Morse telegraphic code is used.

had, and the Captain pointed out the more important strategical features to me.

On the return trip we slipped down the heavy grade from Bushman's Hoek, where a complete horseshoe-curve skirts the edge of a steep embankment. As the train flew along the narrow-gauge track, rounding sharp curves at great speed, it seemed that it must leave the track and crash down the mountain side. Indeed, I felt so sure that this would happen that I kept myself braced against the side of the car, so as to relieve the force of the fall when it came. Of

course nothing happened. Lieutenant Cosset fully knew what he was about, but for all that I was glad to reach Sterkstrom camp again and leave the train.

At this time General Gatacre was much broken in spirit, and, in the opinion of those who had known him a long while, a greatly changed man. Captain Tennant discouraged any interviewing, and so it happened I never came into personal contact with the General other than by a mere formal introduction, which he acknowledged without comment. Among the officers, correspondents and soldiers, however, I found that he was highly esteemed as an officer and a gentleman. The Tommies spoke affectionately of him as "the old man." He had the reputation of working his men very hard; yet, it was always said, "no harder than he himself worked." All sympathized deeply with him in the disgrace which had attended his reverse at Stormberg and after his dismissal, when the five Irish companies were captured at Edenberg and the blame was wrongly laid on his shoulders, he being made a scapegoat to satisfy the public clamor in England; everyone acquainted with the facts was loudly indignant, for his failure to relieve the Irish companies was said to be entirely due to orders being sent to him direct, from Lord Roberts, to remain where he was, until it was too late. Months after, when I had become

General Gatacre reads a Despatch.

a guest of the Boer army, I heard an interesting tale about his reverse at Stormberg. General Oliver was his opponent. Had General Gatacre marched half an hour longer, on that disastrous night, instead of retreating, he would have reached an impregnable position unoccupied by the Boers, which would have separated General Oliver from the rest of his army. Oliver's retreat would have been cut off, and he would have been forced to surrender to General Gatacre. The failure to do this ruined General Gatacre's reputation and shattered his health. This is a striking instance of how an accidental decision the wrong way at a critical time diverted victory from the British and gave it to the Boers, and is one of many instances which has made South Africa "the graveyard of reputations."

During my stay at Sterkstrom I had the pleasure of accompanying the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture of Canada, Mr. W. B. Scarth, and his party, including Captain Martyr of the steamship *Montauk* and the Misses Scarth. The party had sailed from Boston with a load of Canadian hay—a gift from the colony to the Imperial army. Arriving at East London, they went to the front in a special car, and I met them at Molteno, the most advanced outpost of Gatacre's command, on the scouting line.

On another occasion I made the fifteen-hour journey by rail from Sterkstrom to East London, Cape Colony, and courted certain sea-sickness for the purpose of going out on the tug to the steamship *Moor*, to meet Consul Hay on his way to Pretoria. The Consul promised to get me out of prison if I was captured, and I took a snap-shot of him, which I had the pleasure of presenting to him personally in Pretoria five months later, a few hours before Lord Roberts' occupation of that city. After two weeks at Sterkstrom, during which I made repeated trips to East London, it began to dawn on me that General Gatacre was not to be allowed to

take any further active part in the war, and that the wily Press Censor at Cape Town had bested me, after all, by sidetracking me to this point, while the real campaign was to take place under Lord Roberts' personal supervision from Modder River. So I decided to bid farewell to my new friends, being especially sorry to leave the courteous Censor, Captain Tennant, who was afterward taken prisoner

Kaffir Workmen passing through Graham's Town, badly frightening the inhabitants, who mistook the band for a hostile Boer commando.

at Edenberg, and I started again for the Cape, repeating my eighty-five-mile walk—being less fortunate in getting lifts, and one night straying from the road in the darkness and rain, becoming hopelessly lost, and being compelled to sleep until morning in the wet, when, after considerable difficulty, I found the road again and continued my walk to Graham's Town.

So ended my connection with the Third Army Division

in South Africa, which from its many misfortunes, dating from Stormberg and continuing thereafter, affecting almost every officer attached to it, came to be generally spoken of, in the words of Kipling's "Gentlemen Rovers," as "the legion of the lost," or "the cohorts of the damned."

By this time I had begun to doubt the likelihood of the American papers doing anything to help me financially, although I could not expect any answer for a week or more. I had succeeded in spending all of my money but fourpence. However, as I had two large pieces of baggage, I did not hesitate to go into debt to my landlady at Graham's Town. But I realized that something must be done to properly finance myself in case remittances failed to arrive a week later.

The Author a month after arrival in South Africa. Two weeks on eight cents, and no prospects.

I called on Messrs. Grocott and Sherry, proprietors of the "Penny Mail," at Graham's Town, and had a long talk with them. They agreed to correspond with half a dozen other colonial papers, with a view of their collectively taking special service from me as their correspondent at the front.

The plan was that each member of the syndicate was to pay five pounds per month for the service, which would mean thirty for me, or one hundred and fifty dollars. Mr. Grocott gave me a letter of authorization to represent his paper and a few letters of introduction. By this "deal" I

secured the credentials I had hoped to get from America, and which I needed to back up my license. But the money was still a long way off, for the different members of the syndicate insisted that I should send my daily despatches from Lord Roberts' headquarters; and I must by some means procure a transfer from General Gatacre to the Field Marshal's Staff in order to do this, which the advent of Lord Kitchener had made practically impossible.

However, I decided to make the attempt; and with my letters and credentials, my fourpence in cash, and a package of lunch put up by my landlady, kind-hearted Mrs. Kent, who knew nothing of my affairs except that the local paper had noticed that her guest was a "distinguished American war correspondent," I started back on the two-day railway journey for Cape Town *via* the khaki-cursed De Aar, which the green and pleasant camp at Sterkstrom made doubly hideous by comparison.

CHAPTER VII.

BEGINNING ALL OVER AGAIN.

MEANWHILE I had telegraphed to the Chief Press Censor, but had received no reply. Expecting this, I hurried on to Cape Town. There I hunted up the Graham's Town representative in the Cape Parliament, who, fortunately, was strongly loyal, showed him Mr. Grocott's letter, and was introduced by him to Sir Gordon Sprigg, ex-Premier of Cape Colony, and the leader of the loyal party in that body. I persuaded Sir Gordon to write a letter for me to the Press Censor, requesting the addition of the Graham's Town "Mail" to my license, and that it be made general. On presenting this at the Censor's office, I found that Major Bagot was in charge, having superseded Major Evans, who had sent me to Sterkstrom. Major Bagot, one of the suavest men I ever met, betrayed by his manner of refusal that he had no power to act. The newly appointed Chief Censor, Lord Stanley, had gone on to Modder River with Lord Roberts, for the advance from that point was about to begin.

Major Bagot would not even give me a pass to go to Modder River to see Lord Stanley, so I entrained for that point without it. Of course, at De Aar I was arrested by the guard, so I forwarded Sir Gordon's letter, together with a personal note, to headquarters, by a friendly officer, who was on his way to that point. No answer came to this; so after waiting a day at De Aar I went on to Graham's Town again, saw Mr. Grocott, got a new letter addressed to the Chief Censor, and started back for the Cape by way of

De Aar—a proceeding equivalent to having gone from London to Berlin, finding that a letter had been misplaced, going back to London to get it, and immediately returning to Berlin. On reaching De Aar I found my letters and telegrams to Modder River still unanswered, and so did not stop. Of course, by this time my fourpence had been extirely exhausted. I had sold my camera for two pounds ten shillings, and spent most of the money. Mr. Grocott had kindly advanced me more money after hearing the surprising statement that I had lived for eight days on eight cents. Of course the railways furnished my sleeping accommodations during this time, and for meals I depended on lunches and casual invitations to dinner from the many friends I was continually making. Arriving at Cape Town the second time, I asked Sir Gordon Sprigg for another letter, this time to the highest authority at Cape Town, General Forrestier Walker. Presenting this at the Castle, General Walker gave me a note to Major Bagot, asking that Sir Gordon's request be complied with. The Censor relaxed sufficiently at this to add the Graham's Town "Mail" to my license; but as for advancing me to Modder River, all I could induce him to do was to send the following telegram to Lord Stanley, Chief Censor with Lord Roberts:

"Unger, American press correspondent, also representing Graham's Town paper, recommended by Sir Gordon Sprigg through General Forrestier Walker; desires to proceed to Modder River. Signed, Bagot, Major, P. C. (Press Censor)." With my customary modesty, I had no doubt that this would result in an invitation from Lord Roberts to be his personal guest during the rest of the campaign. I told my friends that I was going on to the Modder, wired the same to Graham's Town, and received a congratulatory telegram from the editor of that paper.

Well, I waited all that day for Lord Stanley's reply, and as evening drew near began to feel intuitively that I had scored another failure. A deep fit of the "blues" fastened itself on me. I had less than thirty shillings left, all my resources were exhausted, the time had passed for a reply from America, and I realized that I could expect nothing from that source—in short, I was "up against it," and I knew it. The band was to play in the Municipal Gardens that evening, and I walked up the long avenue until I found myself at the Mount Nelson Hotel.

I knew Mr. Kipling was staying there, and the impulse came over me to call on him. I sent in my card, and a few minutes later found the greatest little man of all England looking pleasantly at me with extended hand, saying,

"Well, what are you doing out here?"

I briefly told him of my aspiration to be a "youngster jerked on at the end of a telegraph wire;" and how, now that I had failed, I was ready to attempt my last alternative of getting captured by the Boers on my return to Sterkstrom, and try my luck as a soldier of fortune in their army. Mr. Kipling appeared much interested and said,

"I like your nerve; but why don't you sink your nationality and join one of our corps of rough riders or scouts? There you'll get the real thing."

I replied that this would prevent my having the necessary freedom of movement, and then suggested that he take me with him as his secretary, servant, driver, or in any capacity he could use me. Mr. Kipling hesitated a moment, and then put me through the most exhaustive examination I have ever had. Could I cook, pack a horse, ride and drive, put up a tent, beg, borrow or steal forage, tell the truth or lie if necessary, mind my own business and never see or hear things not to be seen or heard; was I "discreet," and was I sure I would not "poison him with

my cooking?" And then, when I told him that I was an old Klondyker, he chopped his questions abruptly off with,

"Oh, I guess if you've been over the Chilkoot you have all the necessary qualifications."

My hopes by this time had reached the boiling-point, and just as I expected him to say "All right, I'll take you with me," he said the other thing.

"You see," he added, by way of explanation, "I could never have a man in the same line as myself with me. You would be using my material, and if you wouldn't, you should—I would in your place; in fact, I'd do anything to secure a beat on anybody else." I heard him out patiently, and then said,

"But, Mr. Kipling, I hope you don't think for a moment that I am so foolish as to think myself in the same class with you?"

"That's just where you make a mistake," he snapped out energetically; "you should think yourself every bit as good as I, and make it your object to beat me at my own game. You are a newspaper man, and out here to write what you see, and that is all I'm doing. Keep yourself thinking that you can do better than I can, and don't let yourself think anything else, and perhaps then you will be able to do so." Then after a pause for breath he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "But I've got a pretty good start on you, and don't intend to let you, or any one else, catch up with me if I can help it."

The kindliness of his manner and the forcefulness of his remarks were a powerful stimulant to me, and I felt fully half a foot taller and more of a man in every way. As I was deciding that I would follow his advice and try to beat even the great Rudyard Kipling, he continued, "No, I'm no good for you; but put your address on this card, and I'll speak to a few fellows I know who might be able to

use you, and then let you know." Then he gave me a hearty grasp of his hand, said "Good luck to you," and I walked back to my lodging-house as rich in optimism and determination as any South African millionaire who has ever passed out of the Mount Nelson Hotel in the good old days before the war.

The Battlefield of Spionkop. This photograph has the unique distinction of having been subjected to an attempted suppression by two Governments. Representing the British dead on the field of Spionkop three days unburied, with pockets turned inside out and shoes taken off, the Boers did not relish this evidence of their love of loot. On the other hand, being evidences of the terrible slaughter inflicted on the English, Lord Roberts ordered the confiscation and destruction of all plates and prints at Bloemfontein. Both Boer and British attempts at suppression failed, and a large, surreptitious sale of the Spionkop pictures was carried on, at eight shillings each.

I began to hope for a favorable reply from Modder River, and the next morning took up my stand at the Censor's office and spent the day there. Still no reply. Another day passed in the same way, and as no word came from Mr. Kipling either, I felt the blues coming on again. Mean-

while the first report of General French's advance through the Free State was handed out at the Censor's office, and for ten minutes I fought like a tiger with half a dozen other correspondents for the privilege of copying it, and then rushed it off by wire to Graham's Town. Incidentally the same message was sent by an agency in Cape Town, but allowing for delay in recopying, I succeeded in getting my message delivered ten minutes earlier, which gave "The Mail" a chance to issue its extra a few minutes before its local rival, which was a member of the same agency. When the excitement subsided I began to fret and worry to get back to the front at once. So I tackled the Censor once more, and got him to promise to forward the Modder River reply to De Aar, so that I could proceed at least that far on my journey and save precious time. I was now reduced to just one pound sterling, and with a big package of lunch entrained for the North again.

All that night, then all the following day, hot and dusty, through the Great Karroo Desert, my fifth trip, and then all night again, and I was at De Aar. Inquiries at the Commandant's office found no message for me. At 9 A. M. the train left for Modder River, and as I had become desperate, I managed to elude the guard and go along. But, alas! half-way, at Orange River, I was not able to show satisfactory cause for being on the train, and was promptly put under arrest and marched off to the Commandant's office by a triumphant sergeant. Of course I was not idiotic enough to allow that individual to do any talking to the Commandant. I simply put on my most injured and innocent air and began "to explain things." After talking a while, the very polite officer said he was sorry he did not have authority to allow me to go on to the Modder River, but that I could telegraph to the Chief of Staff there for the necessary permission. I grudged the

few paltry shillings this message cost me, especially as I knew so well the uselessness of sending it; but off it went, for I did not dare allow my bluff to be "called" by not doing so, and the very polite officer promptly censored it himself to avoid delay. The reply, which I knew would not come, could not be expected anyway for several hours, so though I was nominally under arrest for the time being I wandered away from the station, found the office of the local chief of staff, and asked him to add the Orange River District to my license. This he obligingly did, not thinking it would do me any good, and being, as the English officer always is, a courteous gentleman.

However, in having the freedom of the Orange River District I had made some progress, and when night came, and still no message for me, I boarded a goods train and went back to De Aar, where I hunted up a first-class carriage, with all its accommodations, took a bath and slept the sleep of the just until morning, when I discovered that, as usual, no message for "Unger, American press correspondent," had come yet.

Then I heard the news that Kimberley had been relieved, with great vexation at having missed that show. Becoming fully desperate, I took the morning train back to Orange River, as was now my privilege, concealed myself in a top bunk under a lot of baggage, and succeeded in passing the guards at that place, although I was nearly suffocated for five hours in the heat of the day, while the train waited. At midnight we reached the long-sought Modder, where I was to beard the lion Chief Censor in his den, and either get what I wanted, or escape to the Boer lines, or be sent back to Cape Town under a guard in disgrace, and deprived of my original license with all its privileges, including my precious railroad pass. A guard came in to inspect passes. I pretended to be asleep, and when awakened

drowsily showed my Gatacre license. He took down a name and told me to report to the Commandant in the morning, then left me to another night's virtuous slumber.

In the morning I discovered that Lord Stanley had gone on to Jacobsdal, with the headquarters staff and the army, in pursuit of General Cronje. I called on the Commandant, who referred me to the Chief of Staff, who, in turn, being very busy and anxious to get rid of me, and assuming that I had been there a long time as a correspondent, obligingly complied with my request for a pass for the local outpost. I was then ready to follow up the army to Bloemfontein, always being "on my way to see Lord Stanley" and carefully avoiding finding him, and was about to start out on foot, trusting to Providence to find me horses later on. How I was to keep on living on my remaining ten shillings I did not like to think about, but would trust to luck. Having had such a hard time so far, I was determined to get to the worst of it as quickly as possible.

At this juncture I met Major Pollock, who had represented the London "Times" at Sterkstrom. He introduced me to Mr. Amery, who was in charge of the entire "Times" staff of correspondents. They were discussing means of getting their despatches from the army back to the Modder River station telegraph office. They had several men in view to carry them, but I did not allow that fact to prevent my suggesting that they take me along for the purpose. It did not strike them very forcibly at first, until suddenly Mr. Amery turned to me and asked,

"What is your name?" I answered him, and added that I was an American correspondent. "Why, you must be the man Mr. Kipling was talking to me about," he said. "Can you come with us right away?" I felt like grabbing him about the neck, but instead maintained my composure by a supreme effort, paused a moment, and then

hesitatingly replied, "Well, that will depend upon whether it will interfere with my own work." After further appropriate discussion I finally agreed with him that I could write my weekly letters between times, and accepted his offer of thirty pounds a month and all expenses, including horses and transportation of my baggage. Nominally I was a despatch rider, actually third on the list of the ten "Times" correspondents. As the regulations only allowed "The Times" two regular representatives with Lord Roberts, this arrangement gave them the advantage of having really a third.

While still talking a sentry appeared, saluted, and addressing me as "General Gatacre," requested my presence at the Commandant's office. I knew at once that the night before the guard had taken that name from my license in mistake for my own, and this looked as though my last opportunity was to be snatched from me, when the truth was learned that I had come to the front without permission. However, there was no help for it. Off I had to go to the Commandant's office. There I explained the mistake, and to my infinite relief the officer was so amused at the guard's preposterous error that he quite forgot to question me further. In four cases out of five I invariably found my being an American correspondent predisposed all the authorities in my favor, and fortunately this was one of the four. Late that afternoon Mr. Amery and I rode off towards Jacobsdal on two spirited little ponies, and after we had passed the outposts and I was safe on the wide, free veldt, where no questions were asked, I entertained him with a rough narrative of my experiences in the country up to the time when, thanks to Mr. Kipling, he had decided that I was the "youngster" to be "jerked into the business at the end of the Modder River telegraph wire."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE AFRIKANDERS AND THEIR FEELINGS.

DURING this first month I had travelled nearly two thousand miles by rail and two hundred on foot, covering all of the more thickly populated portion of Cape Colony. Travelling first-class as the guest of the railway, I spent days at a time with representative people of all sections, cooped up in narrow compartments, where tedium enforced conversation between the most reserved strangers. I was greatly impressed with the half-sullen gratification with which the most loyal Afrikanders viewed the recent reverses to the British forces at Magersfontein and at the Tugela.

The Afrikander is the colonial-born descendant of British or other foreign settlers who are not exactly Boers. The word is to Africa what American is to America. For the most part, the Afrikanders were thoroughly loyal to the English cause; yet the same feeling which brings forth a child's triumphant "I told you so" at a playmate's misfortune, stirs up what I have called a "sullen gratification at British disasters."

Being native to the country; familiar with all its geographical, climatic and racial peculiarities; having fought side by side with the Boers in the many Kaffir, Basuto and Zulu wars; thoroughly understanding the jockey-like nature of the Boer in business transactions; fully appreciating his bravery and military resourcefulness, being all the while aware of the warlike preparations of the last three years, and doing everything in their power to arouse the

government to take measures to avoid the coming conflict, the Afrikanders could hardly be blamed for resenting the slothful indifference of the home government to repeated warnings of the state of things in the Transvaal and to the disloyalty of the Cape Colony administrators, who were party to the Afrikander Bond, an organization devoted to the establishing of a United South African Republic. They felt, too, a certain amount of satisfaction at the outcome, which I repeatedly heard expressed as follows: "Except

Behind the "schantzes" at Spionkop. As they fell.

for the poor fellows in the hospitals at Pretoria and those left on the field, it serves the pig-headed English most jolly right." *Apropos* of these defeats, over which all England was so frantic, I heard a grey-headed old veteran of our Civil War say,

"Why, these battles are only skirmishes. We lost more men at Fredericksburg or Gettysburg than the total number of men engaged on both sides in any of these fights."

Even more impressive than the attitude of the Afrikanders

were the many evidences of the fierce, unforgiving hatred, amounting to abhorrence, of the English by the Colonial Boers, scores of whom travelled on every train I was on. The cause of this can only be understood after a careful study of the history of South Africa from the time of its settlement at the Cape by the Dutch, over two hundred years ago. Condensed, it is simply a case of "trek, trek, trek," for the Boers, with the British taking up the lands behind after each removal farther North. I will not attempt to review the incidents, but will content myself with stating as a fact, undisputed by either pro- or anti-Boer, that the hatred and suspicion of all Dutch for everything English is beyond measurement, and to an unbiased observer is simply astounding.

In attempting to reach an understanding of its cause, I was swamped in the flood of historical instances which poured in upon me. For myself, it was enough that so powerful a degree of national feeling, overwhelming in its unanimity, could only arise from some powerful cause, which, right or wrong, had touched the very hearts of the whole people and aroused their strongest feelings and passions. The English-born Britisher, whether in the army or in civil life, on discovering my nationality, made anxious query concerning the attitude of the United States in this war. They appeared to believe that England has America's entire sympathy, yet they were in that condition of doubt which needed continual confirmation of their hopes to satisfy them.

There was something pathetic in this continual craving of the Mother Country for the moral support, at least, of her healthiest daughter. If it suited my purpose to assure them that "America is all right," the assertion was unquestionably accepted with a half-sigh of relief, and I would be offered a cigar, which was also accepted with a more pro-

found sigh of relief on my part; for the condition of my expenses at this time very nearly resulted in putting my wits on the bias.

I met a great many Boers, and had many opportunities of conversation. They were hard to draw out, as I could not speak Dutch; and, as the country was supposedly infested with spies, they were intensely suspicious. However, the recent diasters to the Imperial forces gave me ample opportunity to speak of British blunders and losses in their presence, and the expression of their faces, together with the things they left unsaid, told me that the Dutch to a man were for the Republics. Occasionally I met with a Dutchman whose business interests were identical with those of the British cause. In the case of one old fellow, who was handling large army contracts, with whom I travelled on one occasion, the nature of his inquiries, together with an expression of face which showed intention to conceal expression, told me plainly that his heart was with his brother Boers. The uneducated Duch are always very suspicious of any one who speaks English, and I was unable to extract much information from that class. However, a judicious suggestion of British blunders and Dutch excellence in strategy seldom failed to show brightening eyes when Dutch prowess was being spoken of. At Beufort West, near the edge of the Karroo, a few weeks later, when there was danger of the Cape Dutch rising, an effort was made by the British authorities to raise a town guard of two hundred men to quell any threatened disturbance. The officer in charge of this admitted to me that it failed, because they were unable to get a dozen men on whom they could safely depend as being loyal to the Queen.

Among the uneducated English and the Tommies there wasn't the slightest doubt of America's attitude. "Why, didn't the American Government send out the hospital ship

Maine?" was usually delivered with an air of finality which silenced further attempts to draw out Mr. Atkins.

The "natives" (blacks) with whom I came in contact were impenetrable. Comparatively few spoke English, and they were purposely kept in ignorance of the state of the war as much as possible. However, in some sections they were described as being "very quiet;" "quite too much so," some of the older men would say. In other districts they were "restless." In appearance they seemed to be much like our American negroes, only much more browbeaten and cowed, even in English-ruled Cape Colony. The Kaffirs are of a more degenerate race; while the Basutos are all fine specimens, physically, but not quite so hardy or warlike as the Zulus. While on my long tramp across the bush between Graham's Town and King William's Town I met many groups of from two to twenty Kaffirs on the road, some of them evil-looking fellows enough, and in the dim moonlight casting dark shadows across the path. Out on that barren veldt, ten miles from the nearest civilized habitation and in my lonesomeness, I was often in some trepidation; but by putting on a bold front and stalking through their midst, forcing them to turn out of my way or collide with me, they always stepped aside with a celerity that told its own story; while a hearty "Halloo, boys!" invariably brought back a pleased chorus of guttural grunts, which from its evident infrequency also told its story.

One of the chief causes of the Boer hatred for the English is the latter's alleged "lifting up of the niggers and setting them on a level with white men." At this time the Boers were accused of inciting some of the Basutos and Matabeles to take up arms, but I afterward learned that both sides were equally desirous of preserving the war as a white man's fight.

I know little of the native character, and came too slightly into contact with "the silent, sullen people, half devil and half child," to rouse more than the childish side of their nature. One may be sincerely thankful that the devil side of native South Africa was not let loose, which would have resulted, had they risen in their millions, in a common war against all white men, as was the danger for many months, and is even now not entirely over.

The British failure in the early part of the war was explained to me in many ways by the Colonials and Afrikanders. For four hundred miles my travelling companion on one occasion was a Scotchman, whose thirty years' residence in South Africa had made him to all practical purposes an Afrikander. He was a member of Parliament from a half-English and half-Dutch constituency, and sufficiently loyal to possess an admission pass into every British military camp in the country. His explanation of British failure was, "Our artillery is out-ranged by that of the Boers. The 'up-and-at-them men' of the English may be well enough in fighting niggers, but that sort of fighting is all foolishness out here. It's simply slaughter for the English to do anything until they get more and better artillery." The practical sense of this is realized when one considers the nature of the country from which the Boers had to be driven. The mountains and kopjes on which they entrenched,—steep, stony, devoid of bush, tree or grass,—form an endless series of natural fortresses, the taking of which by assault was quite impossible. The commander of an outpost of Mounted Police from the Cape told me, "The Dutch are the cleverest mounted forces in the world, and every man of them is mounted, too. As for riding, it makes no difference whether on the level or up or down the steep and stony sides of a kopje, they always go at a dead run. Their horses are trained to such

usage; and, in addition, every horse knows his own master. The rider leaves his horse standing, hides behind a rock, and blazes away, never wasting a single cartridge. When our men get too close, they bolt for their horses and gallop off, leaving our men to advance over empty ground or perhaps into a trap. They fight in such extended order that there is no getting at them; and"—as the memory of

The Burial Trenches at Spionkop, showing English dead. Colonel Blake of the Irish American Brigade told the author that they were buried so carelessly that the first rainfall washed away the soil, leaving knees, elbows, feet, legs and arms protruding.

Stormberg came back to him, he continued—" and as for tricks, the devil himself can't beat the Dutch for cuteness."

Another source of weakness was revealed to me by a prominent railway official in whose company I travelled nearly eight hundred miles. He was an Afrikander, and his pet grievance against England was the insufficiency of her intelligence department. With us was a captain of

the British army, and I succeeded in getting the two into a discussion.

"I don't want to criticise my own side," he said, "but the way in which our intelligence department has been conducted is an infernal outrage. The Boers know every move we make or think of making, while we hardly know either their position or numbers. But then," the officer interposed apologetically, without contradiction, "we must remember that we are fighting in the enemy's country, where every farmhouse, town and village is filled with their sympathizers;" which statement, made then, when the Boers were invaders of Cape Colony, was rather a serious admission.

CHAPTER IX.

SOME TYPES OF WAR CORRESPONDENTS.

WITHIN the general military operations another fiercely contested campaign was waged by the small army of war correspondents who had drifted to South Africa in the wake of the Imperial forces. Fully one-third of these knights of the pen and pencil were collected from the ends of the earth under the erroneous impression that they were to be the guests of the army, that a horse, tent, servant, rations, forage and transportation would be furnished gratis, and that the Imperial Government would generally do what it could to make the life and work of correspondents as inexpensive and pleasant as possible. The fact was that, when licensed, the correspondent was allowed to draw a limited amount of food for himself, servant and horses, for which a pretty stiff price had to be paid, usually a week or month in advance. Horses and servants were absolutely necessary, and the usual outfit in the field included a two-wheeled cart, two driving-horses, one or two riding-horses, and a Kaffir servant. All this meant an outlay of a thousand dollars at the start, and about fifty dollars per week for running expenses, to which had to be added the great expense of cabling messages, which cost from one shilling and sixpence to five shillings per word, according to whether press rate or full rate was charged. The Censors were usually courteous and gentlemanly officers, especially selected for their tact in dealing with this very sensitive, annoying yet indispensable newspaper contingent. Nevertheless, short shrift was allowed

for the transgressor of the press rules. There was a small but gradually increasing colony of correspondents at the Cape who had violated these regulations in a more or less flagrant manner, and, as a consequence, had been deprived of their licenses and sent down from the front under escort. Then followed a miserable existence, their expense allowances generally having been stopped, living from week to week on borrowed funds, all the time making ceaseless efforts to have their licenses restored. Meanwhile every other correspondent who ran down from the front for a few days' rest was besieged with solicitations from these unfortunates to be taken up to the front again as servants.

Of course, to do this would be to risk the loss of one's own license also, so the request was invariably refused. Perhaps after a month or more of weary waiting a new license might be granted, or else the man would enlist in one of the irregular mounted forces at five shillings per day; or, last of all, take a third-class ticket back to England, to face the world there with a ruined journalistic reputation. These misfortunes were usually the result of overzeal. One man went down from the front to the Cape to avoid having his articles censored, and wrote a vigorous letter severely criticising a certain commander, which in due course of time brought about his disgrace. Another was found in suspicious proximity to the enemy's lines, and went back to the Cape under guard. Two others, at a critical moment, bothered the headquarters staff with superflous questions and were arrested on the spot, not to be released until reaching Cape Town. Still another got drunk and gave vent to a rather free expression of his opinions before certain officers, which resulted in his fall from grace. And so on the list might read, painfully long in the rehearsal of misfortune and fault.

Another colony, which was always of great size, was

that of the newly-arrived unlicensed correspondents. They each, in turn, went through the weary round of repeated trips to the Censor's office, the Chief of Staff's, the Commanding General's; until at last success followed their efforts, or else, disgusted and disappointed, they returned home. A very few persisted in the face of failure, and eventually got to the front in the capacity of servants, transport conductors or despatch-riders. Others brazenly remained at the Cape, got all the local papers and telegrams, and coolly proceeded to "fake" their copy. At the Mount Nelson Hotel there were a few representatives of the larger papers who were expected to remain there and watch the development of the political situation in the Cape Colony. These men stood at the very top of their profession, and were largely selected because of their social and literary qualifications.

There were possibly, altogether, two hundred newspaper men in South Africa, many of whom had gone there at their own expense, armed only with the necessary credentials. A number of officers acted as correspondents, while a few enlisted men were also doing work for home papers. Of course these were too much hampered by their duties to do more than mere descriptive work; but still they figured on the lists and helped to swell its proportions, and the large number of correspondents already in the field was the chief obstacle to the granting of licenses to the new arrivals. The month of January, 1900, was an especially trying one to the correspondents. With the exception of the daily skirmishes at Colesberg, all operations had come to a halt, and there was no news. Men assigned to General Gatacre were trying to get exchanged to General French, while those at the latter's camp wanted to get over to Gatacre. Each one was trying to have his license made general, in order to have the freedom of all camps; while,

among them all, the Chief Censor was roused to a condition of fine fury. Yet there were not a few amusing incidents to relieve the monotony. An American correspondent at Colesberg wired to Gatacre for permission to come to Sterkstrom. The reply came back, "All right, come ahead; but the press staff here is already larger than the army." General Gatacre's inactivity for over five weeks had made his correspondents the most restless and dissatisfied of the entire lot. However, with the advent of "Bobs" and the advance from Modder River, a general leniency was granted in favor of those fortunate enough to be north of that river, and they were given an entirely free hand. Lord Kitchener wanted to ship them all out of the country; but Lord Roberts thought the public had some rights, and contented himself with simply restricting their number. The larger English papers had men with each column; so that, since at this time there were no less than four different campaigns going on simultaneously, the expenses mounted up frightfully.

Just before General French left Colesberg, an artist, representing "Black and White," while watching the daily artillery duel from Coleskop, observed a fine-looking Boer horse, with a feed-bag on his nose, walking out on the veldt below. As may be easily imagined, the Boer owner was in an unenviable rage at being unable to go out into the open and lead his horse back; while our artist friend, together with hundreds of other Britishers, were looking with envious eyes on the fine animal, fondly hoping it would stray close enough for them to "commandeer" it. Sure enough, on his return to Rensburg the artist passed close by the animal, which had wandered that way. It was a little risky, but, for all that, he took his chances to effect a capture. Seizing the strap hanging from the nose-bag, he undertook to lead the horse in, with the air of a General

surrounding a Boer commando; but the horse thought otherwise, and, like everything else Dutch, turned out to be a mine of surprising revelations in strategy. Instead of quietly allowing itself to be captured, it adopted the expedient of quietly sitting down. The artist kicked and pounded the obstinate animal; but all in vain. As he tugged at the strap, the horse closely watched him over the rim of the nose-bag, all the while keeping his forefeet firmly

"A Modern Ghoul." A German photographer seen by English scouts at Spionkop after the battle piling up British dead, in order to make a particularly gruesome photograph. One of the scouts, unable to control his indignation, took careful aim and shot the artist through the heart. This story, with the photograph, was given to the author by Dr. Vernon Harcourt at Bloemfontein.

planted in front, and braced in such a way that nothing short of a company of Her Majesty's Engineers could have moved him. Finally the zip-zip of a few scattering bullets told the artist that the Boers had at last found the range, and so the attempt at capture was abandoned, and he retired; while, as Mr. Dooley says, "one more 'I regret to state' found its way into the English papers."

I made an attempt to pick up the Dutch language, and

will unselfishly share the accumulations of my first month with my readers. "Kop" is a hill. "Kopje," pronounced "copy," is the diminutive. "Nek" is a narrow strip connecting two kops or kopjes. "Hoek" is a curve or bend on a railway, such as "Bushman's Hoek" near Sterkstrom. It is pronounced "hook." "Rand" is a ridge or one of the summits on a plain of rolling ground, and is pronounced "raant." "Veldt," pronounced "felt," is, of course, the synonym of prairie. A "laagte" is a hollow, bowl-like stretch of veldt.

Elandslaagte is derived from the deer-like eland and their feeding-place. The current form of pronunciation used by the Tommies in referring to the battle of Elandslaagte was to call it "The battle of 'ell and slaughter," which sounds very much like the Boer way of speaking the word. "Spec" is Dutch for bacon. "Boom" means tree; therefore is is very plain that "specboom" means elephant food. Another Dutch word which came into more general use after a few charges by the Lancers was "Kleinzieroch," which means hypersensitiveness to pain. Americans generally are at liberty to pronounce this word as they please. I found it a bit too much, and so abandoned my attempt to study Dutch. Having acquired all this in the short space of four weeks, I think it only fair to denounce as a malicious libel upon a brave, honest and industrious people the reports of some correspondents that "the Boer language is barbarous and extremely difficult to learn."

CHAPTER X.

"AT THE END OF A WIRE" AT LAST.

RIDING across a stretch of fine, dusty sand, we soon left Modder River station behind us, forded the river, and then struck the broad highway cut out of virgin veldt by the broad tires of a thousand transport wagons and twenty thousand bullocks which had passed the same way only the day before. Jacobsdal was only twelve miles away, and there Lord Roberts and his staff were supposed to be resting.

About five o'clock we passed a dozen tents, deserted by the enemy and left untouched by the pursuing army. Then a little later there was a dull, thunder-like explosion some miles ahead, and we looked that way in time to see the still ascending column of smoke and dust as it pierced its way skyward a thousand feet, black and white against the grey-blue background, and then dissolved like falling rain. "Dynamite," said Amery; "a mine, likely; I hope none of our fellows have been hurt;" and then, as no further explanation was forthcoming, we rode silently on, arriving at the small town of Jacobsdal, with its seventeen white flags flying—halting at the hotel to find the headquarters staff gone, General Wavel in command with his brigade, night coming on, and supper a matter of courtesy on the part of the hotel keeper.

However, Amery, who seemed to know everybody, was soon drinking a cup of tea with the General, to whom I was presented soon after. After our horses had a good feed, I bought some bread to add to Amery's collection of

tinned foods; then, as it grew very dark, and Amery having obtained the password, we rode off into the night after the main army. Curiously enough, the countersign was "Modder River," and we had to give it to three lines of sentries, and twice afterward to scouting parties on the road. We rode about a dozen miles, and then, as the moon sank below the horizon and the road disappeared altogether, we off-saddled by the river, knee-hobbled our horses, and laid down on the ground wrapped only in our mackintoshes.

Perhaps an hour passed in silence, disturbed only by the munching of our ponies' teeth on the grass and the

Team of Thirty-eight Oxen or Bullocks Drawing the 4.7-inch Naval Gun on the March.

murmuring of the Modder. A low rumble, like distant thunder, sounded in the distance. Half an hour later it came again. Amery thought it meant rain. We timed it an hour longer, and regularly on the half and on the hour it came again. Then we knew that it was the lyddite from the naval guns in action somewhere ahead in the night, and till daylight I continued to lie quiet, alternately dozing and listening to the rolling of the distant artillery—the first sound of actual warfare I had heard.

At daybreak we were in the saddle again, following the tracks of the army, which spread for half a mile across the

veldt, between a line of kopjes and the river. At ten o'clock we reached Klip Drift, where there had been a fight a few days before. Here a small detachment of troops was encamped, guarding the line of communications. An attempt to secure breakfast failed, as the men were all on half-rations and very "grouchy" as a result. A few miles farther we came to a looted farmhouse. I dismounted and went inside to see what the place looked like. An American volunteer fire company could not have made a more complete wreck. Everything was on the floor and broken—furniture, window-glass and framework, pictures, books and bedding, crockery, clothes, children's toys, and all that goes to complete the household effects of a well-to-do Free State farmer. Infinite pains had been taken to leave nothing undestroyed as each successive band of stragglers filtered through the doors and windows, each stopping long enough to add an additional twist to the contorted framework of the iron bedstead or rip half a foot further the mattress, dig another picture off the wall with the point of a bayonet, wrench the last leg off the table, or break into still smaller fragments the already broken looking-glass and crockery; each several act an expression of brutal hatred for the "dirty Boers."

Eighteen thousand regular soldiers had passed this deserted home, leaving it untouched; but then a squadron of irregular horse passed by, and the stragglers finished what these had begun. The irregular horse were mainly recruited from the Colony; their friends, or perhaps relatives, had suffered from similar depredations earlier in the war, while the Boers were invading the Colony, and their looting and destruction was as much an act of revenge as love of pilfering and wanton destruction.

About noon we reached another farmhouse, from its appearance also badly wrecked. As we rode up I saw an

English soldier coming out with an armful of dishes and disappear in a stable. I followed him, and found fifteen stragglers and sick men camped inside on the ground. They had divested the house of mattresses and bedding, had commandeered a sheep, and were about to serve a delicious stew for dinner. I immediately accepted their invitation for Amery and myself to join them, and at my suggestion a few more chairs and a table were brought out, "to do the thing in style." At the last moment one of the Tommies appeared with a clean white table-cloth and his pockets filled with knives, forks and spoons, more or less dilapidated from having been trodden underfoot and dug out from the general rubbish on the floor. Amery took the head of the table and I the seat of honor at his right. Then two Tommies appeared, with the big kettle between them, and the feast began. Half a dozen others sat at the table. The rest sprinkled themselves around on the floor, in a carriage in one corner, or on their beds. One sat on the top of a small upright piano which had been carried from the house, and diligently pounded the keys with his heels until it became unbearable, when two of the men quietly tipped both piano and Tommy over backward, and the disturbance ceased.

Happening to look back over the veldt, I saw a regiment approaching, spread out in extended order, the end men of which were sure to pass around our stable. Thoughts of arrest and court-martial for marauding at once flashed through my head. I noticed that some of the men appeared frightened as they looked up and saw the approaching body. One of them silently pushed together the big doors of the stable, and we went on eating quietly. Then there was a step outside, the door was flung open, and, as we looked around, there stood the most astonished sergeant in South Africa, his eyes riveted on the feast spread

out before us. He had been living on hard tack for a week. He took one hurried look backward, and then, closing the door, stepped inside and said, "For God's sake, boys, get me a plateful."

It was the quickest meal on record; he fairly drank the stew—bread, meat, potatoes and broth. We stuffed his pockets with biscuits, he snatched a handful of boiled meat to eat on the march and rushed off, as he said, "to report that the stable was occupied by a few sick men."

The 4.7-inch Naval Gun from H. M. S. S. *Powerful* on the march. This gun has a range of nearly eleven miles, throwing ninety-eight pounds of steel and lyddite, and was hauled by a team of thirty-eight oxen. It was attended by a naval contingent from the *Powerful*.

When the convoy with its long train of creaking commissariat wagons was safely over the rise we opened the doors again to let in the flood of sunlight, and continued our eating and getting acquainted with Tommy, who is certainly a good-natured fellow, quick to make friends, easily influenced, naturally turning to a superior officer or stronger will for orders or suggestions about every action of his life. A boisterous, rollicking chap; but only a machine, helpless when stranded or in a difficulty, unless a stronger mind is present to think for him.

The sun was already declining when we left the stable. For two hours more we followed the field telegraph wire which had been dropped by the headquarters staff. The cannonading was now only a few miles ahead. Coming to the crest of a ridge of low kopjes, we saw the entire army spread out before us as though on a map. The crystalline air of South Africa brings most distant objects wonderfully close to the eye. We could see the camps of the different brigades and divisions, the long lines of bullock carts, the tens of thousands of bullocks scattered over the veldt across the river and to our right, tended by the native drivers. To our left, by the river bank, hidden in a grove of trees, behind the field-hospital headquarters, floated the Union Jack over the headquarters of Lord Roberts and his staff, and that was our destination.

Riding up, we learned that everybody had left the place to watch the bombardment which was to begin at four o'clock; so, retracing our steps a mile, we came to and climbed little "Spy Kopje," or signal-hill, dotted all over with generals, lords, dukes, and a prince or so, khaki-clad, with red collars as indications of rank, and a sprinkling of correspondents and colonels. On a point above everybody else were the signal corps wigwagging messages with flags to near-by commands, or heliographing eight miles farther east to General French; back to Klip Drift, Jacobsdal and Modder River; or into the Boer laager where General Cronje and nearly four thousand burghers of the Free State, heroes of Majuba and Magersfontein, with several hundred of their women, were encamped in the river-bed, four miles above.

Then, with the thunder of a "four-point seven" naval gun (almost as large as our five-inch gun), followed by the heavy boom of exploding lyddite, plainly in sight, though four miles away in the laager, the bombardment

began. One hundred and twenty-six guns—only twelve less than General Lee used at Gettysburg—were in a semicircle around General Cronje, keeping up for two hours a continuous rain of lyddite and shrapnel. A magnificent spectacle this,—the general bombardment on the second day after the battle of Paardeburg and the surrounding of Cronje's army in the bed of the Modder River. Cronje had only four guns in action. Till six o'clock I watched the engagement. As one used black powder, the puff of smoke from its mouth showed plainly with the flash. The others used smokeless powder, which showed only a reddish-white flash when fired, after which would follow a swishing, fizzing sound in the air, and somewhere below us a nine-pound shell would explode in a cloud of smoke, and perhaps a few men would scatter from their places around a gun. Meanwhile half a dozen pieces of British artillery, ready loaded and sighted at the spot, had sent their charges true as a die to the place of the flash; and that afternoon three of the guns in the laager were put out of action. How many tons of metal and explosives were hurled at and into the Boer position that afternoon I cannot guess; but with each discharge, especially of the lyddite guns, which sent up a great cloud of thick black smoke where each shell dropped, I felt a thrill as I thought it was the executioner of perhaps a dozen men, and maybe some women.

A tall, girl-faced young officer, attached to somebody's staff near by, said, with an affected drawl, "This is the grandest bombardment I have ever seen." On the other side a grizzled old colonel, with India, Egypt and the Crimea written on his face, muttered, "Damned ass! I'd like to know what others he has seen!" The old fellow was righteously ruffled at the youngster, for his well-trained professional optics had been focused silently for hours on

this affair, now historic, for it was one of the heaviest bombardments of modern times. How any one escaped annihilation up there in the river bed was beyond my comprehension. Surely, I thought, unless they surrender there will be only a few hundred of the poor fellows left; and when I thought of the women it was with a feeling of detestation of the English, in spite of the fact that the Boers had been equally callous to the existence of women and children in Kimberley and Ladysmith.

The use of lyddite in war may be described as follows: The roar of a 4.7-inch gun is quickly followed by the explosion of the lyddite shell, two or three miles distant. A few seconds elapse; then suddenly a black cloud of smoke appears near the ground, sharp black points pierce the air in every direction, rounding out into huge dark clouds, which slowly settle and spread their supposedly poisonous vapors over the ground. Four, five, six seconds pass in silence; then is heard a resounding thunder-clap, as though from a clear sky; it is the sound of the bursting shell, crashing and shattering the air, deafening the ear, echoing and re-echoing, rumbling away, with several revivals, until silence and the flattening of the black vapors on the surface of the veldt follow minutes after; while commanders, officers, gunners and correspondents keep their eyes intently on the spot, to note the effect of ninety-eight pounds of steel and lyddite on the laager and its defenders.

CHAPTER XI.

"THE TIMES" MESS AND A FEW ADVENTURES.

FAR away to the ruddy west the sun touched the edge of the veldt and sank behind a low ridge of the omnipresent kopjes; then the bombardment ceased without having compelled General Cronje to raise the white flag. Throughout that and the following seven nights the irregular fire of the naval guns continued. Night was the only time the besieged burghers had in which to get out of their trenches to stretch their cramped limbs, drag away the dead bodies of cattle and horses, and prepare their meals. Even this slight respite was broken into all through the night as the familiar "swish-swish" of a British shell scattered all hands to cover in the trenches.

After the bombardment Amery and I rode back to headquarters, where the exquisite Battersby, of the "Morning Post" and "New York Journal," entertained us at supper, while he sent his servants to find "The Times" cart. When discovered, Mr. Percival Landon, "The Times" correspondent attached to Lord Roberts, was missing; his servants had not seen him for twenty-two days. He had gone into Kimberley with General French, had started alone from there, according to rumor, for Paardeburg, and it was feared he had fallen into the hands of the enemy. Still, we now had a home,—a huge two-wheeled affair known as a Cape cart,—buggy-topped, two-seated, and drawn by two horses. Under this we slept, covered by the blankets found inside, and slumbered soundly in spite of the cannonading during the night.

Early in the morning I was awakened by a furious rattle of rifle volley-firing. Simultaneously one of the Kaffir servants approached with a cup of steaming coffee, to be drunk before dressing, according to the custom of the country. After a hasty toilet on the river bank, Amery and I rode off in the direction of the noise. This seemed to be somewhere near Kitchener's Kopje, a lone bulwark

The Commanding Officer of an Outpost taking his Morning Bath on a Kopje. His tub, a rubber blanket laid over a small hole in the ground—the water carried a mile and a half in water-bottles by a file of Tommies.

of rock three miles south of the laager and four miles eastward from headquarters, and named for a blunder which General Kitchener had made by abandoning it.

Half-way there we came upon a regiment of the Black Watch, of Magersfontein fame. While Amery was talking to a group of officers I rode off to one side, toward some rising ground, to get a better view of the country.

I was near the transport wagons, among which a crowd of native drivers were attending the horses and bullocks. As though a gigantic bottle of champagne had been opened, a loud fizzing burst on my ears from the sky overhead. The men near by threw themselves flat upon the ground. I had not time to follow their example. To the left I heard a muffled explosion, like a half-buried cannon-cracker on the Fourth of July. Looking in the direction of the sound, I saw a small cloud of white smoke not thirty yards distant; then, as several men ran toward it, I galloped ahead of them, and found a hole several feet broad and half as deep, and a few pieces of twisted metal scattered about, which I collected as souvenirs of my first experience under fire, for they were the remains of a fifteen-pound shrapnel shell—one of the last shots from the last gun in the laager. No damage had been done, but, somehow, I was impelled to ride back and stay with Amery for a while.

Thinking over the incident later, I was unable to recall any sensation of fear. Surprise, as it slowly dawned on my mind that an enemy's shell was coming, was followed by intense curiosity to see it explode and note its effect. The instinct of the newspaper man as a professional observer had, to my supreme gratification, remained uppermost, and I felt that perhaps as a war correspondent I would be able to acquit myself creditably, if only the opportunity would come my way.

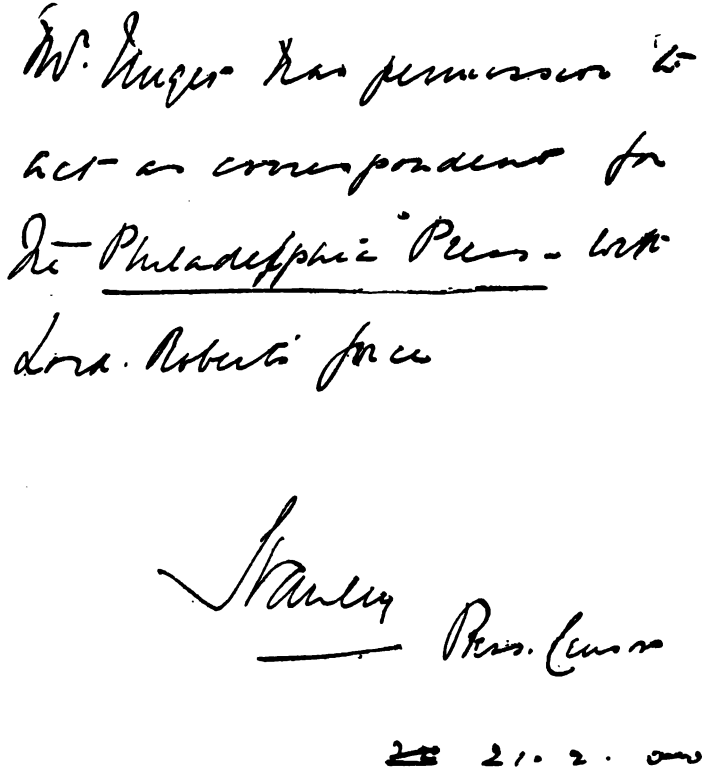
Then it occurred that better than waiting for an opportunity would be the creating of one. Perhaps the absence of Landon suggested the idea to me. However that may be, I hinted to Amery that since Landon was supposed to have joined General French twelve miles beyond, on the other side of the laager, I would be glad to ride on and try to find him. There was some risk, but more definite information of his whereabouts was desirable; Amery could

not go himself, and Major Pollock would join the column sometime later in the day to assist Amery in the work of correspondence. Then, too, as I thought to myself, he can carry despatches back to Modder River while I will have a chance to see some fighting. Fortunately for me, Amery fell in with the idea at once. As he said,

"Lord Stanley was very angry at your having come up without leave, for he had answered your telegrams with a negative reply. He was about to have you put under arrest at once and sent back to Cape Town; but I prevailed on him not to do so, as we needed you. He gave me a pass for you, and I think it would be just as well to keep out of his sight for a little while."

He then got out his memorandum book and gave me a slip of paper on which were a few words in ink, over the most noble Lord Stanley's signature, to the effect that I had "permission to act as correspondent for the Philadelphia 'Press' with the forces under Lord Roberts." This slip of paper, according to the latest press regulations, gave me the freedom of the entire army. Still, some verbal restrictions were imposed which made it advisable not to obtrude my presence about headquarters for the present, and so we decided that I was to hunt Landon. Incidentally I resolved to secure from the genial Censor, at some future time, a printed slip such as was issued to the other correspondents. Amery rode off with me, intending to go part way. Kitchener's Kopje lay to the right, occupied by an outpost of Botha's relieving column, trying to aid Cronje; the laager lay to the left. Between was a perfectly flat open stretch of veldt, across which we had to ride to reach General French's headquarters at Koodoosrand Drift.

Riding toward this open country we came on the most advanced outpost and skirmish-line of the besieging army. A shallow line of trenches, filled with men of the Essex



Special Correspondent's War License issued to the author at Paardeburg by Chief Press Censor Lord Stanley. According to new regulations previously issued by Lord Roberts, this license gave the bearer the extraordinary privilege of roaming at will throughout the district occupied by the Imperial Forces—the headquarters camp, Brigade and Divisional camps, firing lines and outposts, as well as the entire line of communications, being alike free of access to the bearer at all times, both day and night, during the march or in time of active hostilities.

regiment, was the target for the Boer sharpshooters, only a thousand yards distant in the laager. The men were lying carelessly about, sitting on the earthworks or walking up and down the line. A Gatling gun was near the end of one trench, while a hundred yards back, in a hollow, a 4.7-inch gun was waiting, its crew moving restlessly about. I inquired the reason of these unwarlike manners on the firing-line, but no one seemed to know anything. Looking down toward the river and the laager, I saw something white waving in the air. Had Cronje surrendered? Surely there was a man approaching, with a white flag waving fifteen feet above his head. As he drew nearer I saw that he wore khaki.

A staff officer rode up, and I asked him what it all meant. Then I learned that Lord Roberts had sent a messenger into the laager to offer Cronje any medicines or surgeons he might need, and an opportunity to remove from the laager the women and children who were with him. When the bearer of the flag of truce reached the firing-line a sharp order was shouted out, the men tumbled into their places again, and at the same time a metallic ring, like that of a tensely-drawn wire fence struck by a stone, sounded in the air overhead. Then another "zinged" lower down near the ground, and I heard a Tommy say, "The beggar caught that ant-hill back there." A short, angry, hornet-like buzz between us caused the staff officer to remark, dryly, "They have the range on us." We rode back toward the naval gun, where the bullets continued to fly high overhead, sounding like supernatural whispers, until the abrupt "pop-pop" of the British rifles in the trenches we had just left broke in and announced that Lee-Metfords and Mausers were again in deadly combat at a distance of nearly a mile apart. It was quite different from the old-time wars, when the firing-lines were only fifty yards

apart, and men could see the whites of each other's eyes instead of pointing at an ant-like speck almost a smooth-bore cannon-shot's range away. All this argued ill for the pacific nature of the truce-bearer's message of reply, and later I heard that Lord Roberts' offer had been curtly refused.

The way to Koodoosrand lay between the laager and Botha's outpost on Kitchener's Hill. We galloped our ponies midway between, hoping to escape observation ; and, being a mile and a half from either point, our chances of being hit, if seen, were small. When half-way across, a spent bullet from the laager hit Amery's horse on the leg, inflicting only a scratch ; but the animal stumbled, struggled to regain its feet, plunged ahead a few yards, and then ploughed up the soft turf with its nose as it fell heavily, pitching Amery over its head, breaking his glasses and scratching his face badly. A deserted carriage stood near by, and we stopped and got behind it for protection. I wrote a short note, to be mailed home if I failed to return, and Amery prepared to go back. Suddenly there came the familiar "swish-swish" of the morning, as a shell flew overhead. It came from Kitchener's Hill. The Boer artillery seemed to be opening on us personally, so we separated,—I riding rapidly onward to get out of range, while Amery returned to the British lines.

Shortly afterward I passed a dead horse,—a magnificent grey. A new saddle, with a complete accoutrement of wallets and saddle-bags, filled with supplies, tempted me to stop and make an effort to substitute the outfit for my scanty one. My pony refused to go near, and as there was not even a stone to which to tie him, I was reluctantly compelled to abandon the effort. By this time it was evident the firing from Kitchener's Kopje was not directed at me, but at the laager, and a few days later I learned that

from a point five miles southwest an English attack had been made on the outpost that very morning, and the cannon-firing was from British guns, dragged up immediately after the rout of the Boers.

Leaving the dead horse, my route took me close to the river, which made a big bend to the right. On its banks, in a grove of small trees, I could now see a number of men walking about. Being, as I thought, fully three miles above the laager, I rode over to make inquiries. As I drew close enough, an opening in the trees revealed to my astonished eyes an unmistakable group of fifty or more Boers scattered about on the ground. To retreat was impossible, for, being within less than two hundred yards, they could have riddled me with bullets; so I boldly galloped up. Another surprise greeted me a few moments later, when I saw under a tree, close by its trunk, a British Tommy leaning on his rifle; a short distance off stood another; and as I approached closer I saw that my "Boers" were a party of prisoners under guard.

I soon found the commanding officer of the several regiments, isolated there by somebody's mistake, without food or other supplies, and until the recapture of Kitchener's Kopje in hourly danger of being captured. I received a pass which enabled me to proceed back several miles from the river to a farm occupied by the Scottish Borderers, where I would receive further information about General French. As I galloped back past the prisoners I was arrested. My appearance was not unlike that of the Boers, for I wore a black coat, grey riding-breeches, a soft felt hat and riding-leathers. The officer who detained me, a young lieutenant, laughed at my being a correspondent. I produced the pass just given me, also the one received from Lord Stanley the same morning, and a magical change came over him as he apologized; and, riding away, I realized

that in being a correspondent there was some prestige which it would be well to remember in future.

Arriving at the farm,—a beautiful spot, surrounded by willow-trees,—I found the regimental officers' mess about to dine, and I promptly accepted a cordial invitation to join them. Here all was luxury. Tables and chairs from the house; chicken, duck and lamb from the farm-

The Midday Lunch. Officers' Mess of D Troop, Roberts' Light Horse, resting for lunch while on the march. Lieutenant Bradshaw kneeling, Captain Vignoles at his side, and Major Congreve, who won the Victoria Cross with Lord Roberts' son at Colenso, standing. Correspondent Reiss, of the "Manchester Guardian," to the left.

yard; cigars and whiskey from the Colonel's kit, and twenty or more of the best fellows in the world gathered from the ends of the empire. We had much to talk about, much news and information to exchange. The Major drew for me a map of French's position, which I could easily reach before dark, and half the afternoon passed pleasantly, while I almost forgot Landon and "The Times." The table was set beneath a row of weeping-

willows, beside a small brook, draining a magnificent spring of clear cold water,—a rare luxury on the veldt,—and I congratulated the officers on their beautiful headquarters, cautioning them not to let Lord Roberts find out how well they were situated or he would commandeer the place for the general staff. The Colonel admitted danger of this, and, strangely enough, a week later "The Times" mess occupied this very spot and Lord Roberts the farm-house, while the Colonel and officers of the King's Own Scottish Borderers Regiment were moved out on the open veldt.

Toward evening I rode off with a final caution from the Colonel to "Look out for Boer scouting parties!" A rough wagon-road between a line of low kopjes and the river showed me the way. The kopjes were the danger-ous places, and I kept a sharp lookout. Three miles were passed over without incident; then from a bigger kopje I saw two men riding toward my path. Their rifles shone clearly in the setting sun. Again it was useless to try to escape; I hoped they were English. When they came up, without further question I was ordered to "come along." Their worn clothing looked like khaki, but their hats were felt with a black feather—not helmets. Their general appearance was rough. I started to explain that I was a correspondent, but that wouldn't "go." Off I went between them up the kopje, over a barb-wire fence; the men silent, refusing to answer any questions. Passing around a spur in a hollow of the kopje, I saw half a hundred horses and as many men scattered about half a dozen fires. A rough Boer-looking wagon occupied a conspicuous position; beside it I saw a tall, slender officer in unmistakable khaki, and I knew it was only another case of "show up" of passes and on I could go. But the delay was vexatious. The officer smilingly inspected my papers, and then, with

what I had learned to recognize as the aristocratic drawl, said,

"If you are going on to General French, you will be unable to get there before dark, so you may as well take supper with us and stay here until morning. We have just made a rather rich haul," here he looked toward the wagon, "and, really, it will be worth your while." So, for the third time in two days, I promptly accepted an invitation to dinner. The command proved to be the squadron of Roberts' Light Horse, occupying the kopje as an outpost of General French's cavalry brigade. Receiving here definite information as to the location of General French's headquarters, it was really unnecessary for me to proceed farther the same evening, as I could accomplish my mission the following morning and return to Lord Roberts' headquarters before noon.

The squadron had taken part in the rout of the Boer outpost from Kitchener's Kopje that morning, attacking the fleeing burghers on the flank, capturing a number of horses, transport wagons, and the personal cart belonging to the elder General Botha. The troop-major offered me a drink of whiskey from General Botha's private supply, pried open a fresh box of Botha's cigars, and while I smoked one of a handful he spread out before me the General's own military commission, signed by President Steyn of the Orange Free State. Then we sat down to dinner, served on General Botha's dishes, spread on a blanket from the General's cart, and by the time we got down to a second issue of his cigars and whiskey, and were soothed by the digestive process acting on tender and well-cooked lamb, we all agreed that General Botha had performed a signal service to the Imperial army, represented by ourselves, by his precipitate departure from the field of action and unceremonious desertion of his luxurious outfit.

"It is a mistake to call the Boer Generals barbarians," remarked the Major, as he removed a choice cigar from between his teeth, to drain from a china teacup the last drops of the first decent coffee that had passed his lips since before the dark days of Magersfontein.

By the dim firelight, after supper, I had conversations with a few of the troopers. One was an old Californian and had been to the Klondyke, which made us friends at once;

D Troop, Roberts' Light Horse, Lieutenant Bradshaw in command. Bradshaw resigned from Her Majesty's Army half a dozen years ago, drifted to the Western United States, and became a member of the Sixth Cavalry, U. S. A. After serving his term of enlistment he became an officer in the Philadelphia Mounted Police Force, serving until the outbreak of the war, when Lord Roberts offered him a commission by cable from Cape Town, which he accepted at once. His wife is a niece of Lady Roberts.

he was now the officers' cook, and had captured the wagon, single-handed, that morning. He was tall and lanky, and confidentially expressed immeasurable contempt for the "slow Britishers."

"Why," said he, "if I had half a hundred Texas rangers or Apache scouts out here I'd be in Bloemfontein by this time. And what do you think?" he continued: "Our bloomin' Major has asked Bobs' permission to keep this

damn cart! They'll likely take it away from us for his foolishness, instead of keepin' his mouth shut and holdin' onto it."

Another type of trooper was the Honorable William Beresford, son of one of the Lords Beresford, brother of the "Central News" correspondent and of Captain Beresford of the Irregular Horse. He was one of hundreds of younger sons who went to Cape Town and there enlisted in the irregular horse squadrons out of pure "deviltry" and desire to "see the show."

Johnson, the cook, gave an exhibition of Yankee enterprise the day before my arrival by capturing a handsome stallion, for which his aristocratic Major paid him twenty-five pounds. Months afterward I learned that the stallion escaped two nights later, in spite of two men who had been detailed to watch him; and as for General Botha's cart and the other supplies captured that morning, the whole outfit was retaken, and a score of the troop, including the Yankee cook, were either killed or captured by General De Wet at Sanna's Post, near Bloemfontein.

Before I left on the following morning the Yankee cook helped me select a new saddle, bridle and wallets from the heap of captured Boer effects, and when I rode off to Koodoosrand I had a lighter heart, a fuller stomach, a better outfit and kinder feelings for Tommy and his officers than at any time since I had "hit the trail" in South Africa.

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CHAPTER XII.

UNDER ARREST AGAIN.

ARRIVING at General French's headquarters, I found no trace of the missing correspondent, and so returned toward Paardeburg. Dinner-time brought me again to the Scottish Borderers as the officers were sitting down to their midday meal, and for the second time I became their guest until an approaching rainstorm made me hurry off, despite cordial invitations to remain. The farm was surrounded by an immense hedge of century plants, enclosing at least forty acres of ground. As I rode out at the lower end I passed seven or eight ponies, all of which were more or less disabled by saddle-galls or wounds. As they could only hobble about slowly, I practiced on them for a few moments with a leather lariat I had constructed out of half a dozen straps, in the hope of meeting with an opportunity to lasso one of the occasional Boer ponies I saw on the veldt. Having developed all the skill I cared to, and as the rain was coming on, I off-saddled under a tree, covered my saddles and blankets with my mackintosh, and turned my pony loose with the others, to feed. In half an hour the rain slackened, and after some difficulty I lassoed my own horse. Before I could lift the saddle to his back I was startled by two Tommies coming up on a run, rifle in hand, with two more following closely behind.

"You're wanted up to the 'ouse," panted Mr. Atkins.

"Who wants me?" I queried.

"The Adjutant's orders are to bring you in; come on."

"But what does he want me for?" I gasped, staring at

the fellow, who was getting behind me, as though to prevent my running away.

"I don't know, sir; but you mustn't keep him waiting. The orders are to bring that man what's chasing them 'orses in."

"Oh, certainly," I said, understanding at last that I was once more under arrest,—this time for attempted horse-stealing. "I'll go right with you. Here—help me saddle this horse."

Thomas nearly had a fit at this.

"No, no," he protested; "you mustn't; come right away."

Further remarks on my part were utterly superfluous, for with a "Line up, men!" one stepped beside me, another took his place behind, the first man took the lead ten paces ahead, and to avoid being hustled I walked along, externally quiet, but a raging volcano of suppressed wrath inside; for, in addition to the waste of my valuable time, my horse was still loose, and my saddle and blankets were lying in the rain, which had again begun to fall.

Right here let me pause in my story to advise anyone who aspires to become a war correspondent, a foreign military attaché, or who in any capacity may happen to get in the path of the British army. When you find yourself up against Tommy, don't waste time talking to him. Wait until you see his officer, and devoutly pray that that may not be long. And include in your prayers that the officer may be a colonel, major-general, or field marshal,—the higher the rank, the better.

Back through the rain we marched—I, who had left the Colonel's table an hour previously, after a hearty clasp of that officer's hand. 'Twas a long walk for me, past dozens of grinning Tommies, some of whom recognized me as the Colonel's guest, and, being quick to see the mistake, began

guying my escort. Others, less informed, took me for a spy, and regarded me with an unpleasant show of curiosity. We halted on the clearing where the dinner-tables still stood. Several lieutenants, seeing me, started to walk over to speak, saw my business-like escort, stared in astonishment, and abruptly turned and walked off. I was fast becoming rabidly pro-Boer. My three guards remained standing about me while the first went off to report to the Adjutant. It was no joke; I might be detained a day or more, or heaven only knew what worse idiocy my late hosts might be guilty of. At this moment the Lieutenant-Colonel stepped out of the bushes by the brook, and seeing me, said pleasantly,

"Halloo! So you've decided to wait till the storm is over, after all?"

"Since you have done me the honor of extending the invitation in so kind a manner, certainly," I replied freezingly, to a degree calculated to congeal the rain-drops into hailstones. This officer was one of those good-hearted, friendly men whom wanderers like myself learn to appreciate as the salt of the earth; and as the bewilderment on his face grew until he noticed my escort some distance back, I dropped my foolish dignity, and in reply to his unasked question said, indicating the guard to my right, "This gentleman will explain things." The Colonel looked at the man and said,

"Well, what does this mean?" Then, before the fellow got fairly started on his explanation, he broke in with an angry wave of his hand and a sharp, "Here, you; get out of this!" and the by-this-time badly-frightened Tommies scattered, leaving me a free man once more.

I then explained to my rescuer, who apologized for the mistake,—adding, by way of explanation, that the Adjutant had not been to dinner with us, and had therefore failed to

recognize me through his field-glass before giving the order for my arrest. Though still badly ruffled, I managed to have the grace to laugh at the affair; and then in spite of my protests the Colonel, determined that the unintentional discourtesy should be atoned for as much as possible, walked bare-headed through the rain all the way back to where my horse fortunately still stood, help me up-saddle, and waited until I was well on my way beyond his outpost before he returned.

A week or more later, after Cronje's surrender, I passed this same regiment encamped on the open veldt several miles away. Stopping to chat a few minutes with its commanding officer, he asked me when I was going back to Modder River station, and if I would undertake to secure transportation "at any expense" for their personal supplies which had been left there. He would make me a present of a case of whiskey if I found myself able to manage the matter, hinted that he would not object to my making a good profit on the transportation contract, and gave me an order without limit on the entire outfit, worth several hundred pounds at least, in order to facilitate their removal from the hands of the railway authorities. I was not able to get the things carted to the regiment, but I still retain as a valued souvenir the Colonel's order for the officers' kit of the K. O. S. B. Regiment which twice dined me, and then arrested me as a horse-thief.

Arriving at the correspondents' camp at Paardeburg, I found Major Pollock just arrived with a wagon-load of forage, supplies and baggage; and, after making a hasty report, the three of us took refuge in the already overloaded wagon from a terrific cloudburst of rain, while the Kaffir servants stood outside as carelessly as though getting wet was their regular occupation. Before dark the rain stopped, and we moved our camp across a donga (gulch) and within

a stone's throw of Lord Roberts' tent, where we found a suitable spot between the headquarters staff and the field hospital, near the river bank. Beyond were the picket-lines and a three-mile stretch up the river to the laager. Amery had tried his hand at commandeering, having brought in a small mule which he found on the veldt after leaving me the day before. During the rainstorm it wandered away, fell down a thirty-foot embankment into the river, and after an hour's effort to pry him out of the mud we abandoned the attempt. Two days later he was still standing in the river, the water up to his shoulders, and quietly eating the grass on its bank, and there he remained until the rising waters of the Modder in flood washed him with a thousand other carcasses down the river, out of the Free State and into the Orange River and Cape Colony, thirty-five miles westward.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BATTLE OF PAARDEBURG.

MAJOR POLLOCK returned to Modder River station the following day, bearing our letters and censored press despatches for "The Times." Crossing the river to see something of the British positions to the northward, I rode up a slight elevation, where several officers were grouped about a heliograph and examining a map. The central figure was General Sir Henry Colville, of the Ninth Division, who gave me an appointment for the afternoon, to hear from him the story of the battle of Paardeburg the previous Saturday and Sunday,—a day before Amery and I had started on our ride to Jacobsdal in search of headquarters. Leaving the General, I managed to get within a thousand yards of the laager on our side of the river, where another lyddite gun and a number of eight-inch howitzers were in position. There was no firing that day except between sharpshooters, or "snipers," as they were called, and I did not give them sufficient time to get my range on this occasion, when the first bullet "zinged" overhead.

Late that afternoon Amery and I rode over to Spy Kopje, from which we had watched the general bombardment a few days before. We found General Colville's headquarters at its base, only two hundred yards from the awful grave containing two hundred of his men. Taking us to the top of the kopje, the courteous General told us for "The Times" how Cronje was surrounded. When General French made his brilliant dash into the Free State

the till-then greatest of Boer leaders made a blunder which led on to his Waterloo, and which subsequent events pointed to as "the turning-point of the war."

General Cronje's forces, beginning a retreat up the north bank of the Modder River, came in touch with the exhausted forces of General French, attempting to rejoin the main army, and forced that famous cavalry leader to retreat into Kimberley, with his half-starved horses and men. These were the facts. A report was sent on to Bloemfontein and Pretoria that General French and ten thousand men were additional prisoners in Kimberley, and great was Boer rejoicing throughout the land; and had Cronje returned to his strong positions, just abandoned, the siege of Kimberley might have been continued, and the entire further history of the war would have been different.

General Sir Henry Colville. Photographed at Bloemfontein.

But now a great strategic lie was told to the world. The news was cabled to England that "Kimberley had been relieved by French with the cavalry division." All London and the world believed the lie, and while London and the Stock Exchange went into a delirium of joy, Paris and St. Petersburg sent messages of condolence to Bloemfontein and Pretoria, and the foolish Boers, instead of holding fast until the world learned the truth, were themselves deceived.

The wildest consternation reigned, and Cronje continued his lamentable retreat toward Bloemfontein, leaving the way open for the restoration of direct communication between the Modder River and Kimberley, and allowing the great strategic lie to become a fact.

From then on misfortune seemed to follow every move made by Cronje. On the evening of February 16 he attempted to cross to the south bank of the Modder at Klip Drift. He was halted in this attempt by General Kelly-Kenny's division, which had marched thither to head him off from Orange River Camp. Then followed a race eastward, each of the hostile forces on either river bank trying to get ahead of the other; the one to cross, the other to prevent a crossing, to the south bank. Only seventeen more miles were made that night, for Cronje's transport service was crippled. The oxen and horses alike were dropping by the way from fatigue, refusing to get up, so their frantic masters soon abandoned the effort and simply cut them out of the teams, thereby increasing the burdens of the others. At Klip Drift more than eighty bullock-carts were abandoned during the short fighting with Kelly-Kenny. The supplies were partially destroyed by the Boers themselves.

On the morning of the 18th Cronje arrived at Paardeburg Drift, and was about to cross the river again when Kelly-Kenny's men were seen several miles to the southward, nearly abreast of the Boers. The few carts already across returned, and the weary trek up the north bank continued. Four miles more were covered, when from a ridge of kopjes to the northeast a large body of horsemen were seen, heading off further progress in that direction. This was the cavalry division under General French, which had left Kimberley that morning at three o'clock, arriving at the river at one o'clock, after a forced march of thirty-two miles.

A determined effort was then made by the Boers to force a passage at this point, where there was a big bend or loop in the river. A number of horsemen got across, but only in time to unsling their rifles and repel with great slaughter

a charge made by the Highland Brigade. I was afterward told that the men of the Black Watch and others ran madly down toward the river, not half so much to charge the enemy as to get a drink of water, for which they were almost perishing. A kopje almost three miles south of the river was seized by the British by command of Lord Kitchener, thereby becoming named for him. This position eventually prevented further progress of the Boers in that direction. General Colville with the Ninth Division arrived in time to take part in the charge on the river bank. Several of his guns were sent across the drift to the north bank and joined French's artillery, and Cronje's retreat was completely cut off. During the night the Boers occupied themselves in constructing their wonderful bomb-proof shelters and trenches. A few crossed the river and got as far as Kitchener's Kopje, which had been abandoned by the British.

Here they stopped and occupied the position, a piece of good fortune which, if taken advantage of, might have saved Cronje further loss than that of his transport. For the next three days the Boers held this position, while the British artillery pounded away at the laager, the sappers worked their way up and down the river bed, and the "snipers" on both sides picked off their victims. The first day's fighting had cost the English over eleven hundred men—more than one-fourth as many men as were in Cronje's entire army. Meanwhile reinforcements had arrived from Bloemfontein, and by night scouts arrived in the laager with orders from President Steyn for Cronje to abandon his wagons and come out while the reinforcements under General Botha held the English back.

But now the very qualities which had made Cronje great in success conspired to bring about his downfall. He was a religious fanatic; he believed himself inspired by the

Almighty; and, his Dutch stubbornness asserting itself with all its intensity, he sent back the reply,

"No; I will stay here until I have killed all the English."

For three nights the orders and entreaties for him to escape while the way was yet open were ignored by the old Free Stater, and then, with the attack on Kitchener's Kopje on the morning that I started for Koodoosrand Drift, the outpost was driven from that point and the great khaki net was at last drawn completely around the doomed army, though on the preceding night fifteen hundred of Cronje's men, in defiance of orders, succeeded in crossing the drift and escaping toward Bloemfontein, as the entire army might have done had its commander been less firm at the one time in his life that yielding to others would have saved him, and perhaps his country.

A siege of one week followed this last effort to relieve Cronje. Botha was driven back with a loss of a few men killed and wounded, about fifty prisoners, and part of his transports. Wild stories of doings in the laager filtered through the lines and spread about the camp. One was that a committee of eight of the most influential burghers waited on Cronje with a recommendation to surrender. Incensed at this, it was said that he shot them down in cold blood, one after another. The bombardment almost ceased, for Roberts had come to realize that, with the hundreds of dead horses and cattle lying all over the laager, beneath the hot sun, the position would soon become untenable because of its own terrors. After the surrender, a British surgeon who visited the laager was compelled three times within an hour to submit to a penalty like unto that of sea-sickness, and the Boers themselves confessed to having suffered in the same way every time they attempted to eat. Toward the end an effort was made to break away with the transports, but the British managed to get the range

of the drift with their lyddite, and the attempt was abandoned.

Sufficient artillery-play upon the position was kept up to compel the burghers, with their several hundred men, women and children, to remain in their crowded quarters enveloped in the intolerable stenches, day and night. The lyddite set the wagons on fire, and within a few days only a heap

Family of Free State Boer women and children living near DeWetsdorp. The father, husband and two brothers were captured with General Cronje at Paardeburg. One other brother was killed.

of iron bands, bolts and framework, black and charred, and resting on a pile of ashes, marked the place where each had halted on Sunday, the 18th.

Meanwhile, back in the shady grove of trees about headquarters, in the correspondents' camp, a new world full of incident and happening had opened up to me, in which I had an interview with Lord Stanley, which nearly resulted in his sending me off to Cape Town. I placated him by

ceasing my useless protest and accepting his decision that I was not to advance more than five hundred yards ahead of headquarters. Afterward he relented, and said that if at any time an action might be probable, he would give me special permission to go out to "see the show." His purpose was to prevent "The Times" from seeming to have three correspondents; as a number of papers had been allowed to have only two, he did not care to allow even "The Times" to exceed that number. But I soon learned that Lord Stanley was a man who said a great many things in the course of a day and forgot them later, so I did pretty much as I pleased about that five-hundred-yard line.

The Turkish Military Attaché to Lord Roberts' headquarters.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHICKENS AND CHICANERY.

RETURNING to our camp after listening to General Colville's description of the first day's fight, we found Landon had returned. He was a tall, dark, ruddy-faced Englishman, with eyes rather close together, one of them occasionally going off on the bias, a brown mustache, good figure, kind, but reserved and very "casual." He accepted my *entrée* into the scene of operations quite as he would have taken a letter from the postman—to be given a certain amount of attention, and then pigeon-holed for future reference. For the next few weeks I regarded this able representative of England's "Thunderer" as the very beau ideal of all that a war correspondent should be, and, until his nervous and physical collapse at Bloemfontein, I found it well to study his methods, and to a certain extent make him my model.

One remark he made the first night I met him impressed me deeply, and described the man himself quite accurately. It was after dinner, and five correspondents were smoking pipes or cigarettes, each contributing his share to the post-prandial conversation, the faces darkly outlined by the light of a badly-damaged lantern. From the operating tents of the field-hospital close by escaped an occasional groan, as the surgeons' knives carved their way toward relief, while about the rudely-piled camp-fires the slightly wounded and convalescents grouped themselves in vivid contrasts of light and shadow. In front was the head-quarters of the Field Marshal and his staff, quartered with

the rude luxury of Cape-cart and trek-wagon; beyond, the field-telegraph and darkness; nearby, the subdued murmuring of the Modder as its waters swirled around a dozen bloated carcasses, caught by the branches of a submerged tree in an eddy. When my turn came to talk

Lord Stanley, eldest son of the Earl of Derby, Chief Press Censor under Lord Roberts, attached to the Field Marshal's staff with rank of Colonel. Lord Stanley is an active member of the Lower House of Parliament, holding the important position of "Government Whip." In tactfully controlling the small army of newspaper men without giving offence, his was by far the most difficult position on Lord Roberts' staff. The photograph was taken at Bloemfontein a month after Paardeburg.

about myself, I gave an outline sketch of my travels and unique experiences in strange places abroad and stranger places at home, and concluded with the statement that I had always made it an object in life, rather than bend my energies to mere accumulation of material things, to see all

the things and places worth seeing. The silence that followed this remark was broken by Landon turning to me and saying, with intensified English accent and deliberation,

"Did it never occur to you how much better it would be to make it the object of your life to get to know the people worth knowing?" Often afterward I suspected Landon of a half-veiled sarcasm in his remarks to me after dinner during those evenings on the veldt, and this first time I promptly "came back at him" by admitting that the idea was a new one to me; but that, now that I had met him and Kipling, I would adopt it instead of my old one, just expressed.

Later, when the company had narrowed down to "The Times" representatives only, I told them that while Lord Stanley had given me pseudo-recognition as a correspondent, yet I would not be satisfied until he had given me a full, unlimited license on the regular form issued to the other correspondents, and like the one I already had, which, however, limited me to General Gatacre's division. For some reason this struck Landon as being somewhat presumptuous, and he told me the story of how Kipling and an energetic American journalist had seen a sea-serpent at the same time; how the American proposed to startle England with an account of the discovery; how Kipling advised him to write up the tale as fiction; how the American scorned the advice and suggestion that a people seven hundred years older than himself could not be expected to be jarred into quicker activity, journalistic or otherwise, by a youngster from across the Atlantic; how he tried the sea-serpent on every newspaper and magazine in London, and had the story come back to him with disgusting regularity; and, finally, how Kipling found him one morning wandering about the aisles of Westminster, shaking his head and

greeting his former adviser with the remark, waving his hand toward the surrounding grandeur,

"I understand now why that thing wouldn't go. English journalism is a matter of growth through centuries. Its motion cannot be accelerated; it has become an institution as permanent and unchangeable as this grand old pile."

Then the American journalist went home in a properly humble frame of mind.

The moral of this tale was that the British press censorship was not an affair of Lord Stanley alone; it was an institution,—the growth of custom and precedent that made its decisions irrevocable; so that Lord Stanley's "No," once said, meant "No" forever, and that the sooner I disabused myself of the idea that Lord Stanley could be prevailed upon to do as I desired, the sooner I would be free from the certainty of disappointment. When we went to bed, I thought of the Censors at Cape Town and a few other obstacles which I had already surmounted; then I dozed off to sleep, with my determination still unshaken to make Lord Stanley surrender that license.

Early next morning I started for Modder River station with despatches. First, I had taken them to Lord Stanley, who read the telegrams carefully, crossing out a word here or there, and stamping with his seal each sheet. The letters were stamped only on the outside, as the correspondents were on their honor not to write anything inconsistent with the rules on the subject. The stamping insured their being unopened by the postal authorities under martial law. I asked the Censor if there was anything I could do for him at Modder River, and he gave me some private letters, including several of the Field Marshal's, to carry to the postal authorities there. This made me for the time being an official courier, and I did not hesitate to take advantage of the fact to exact forage for my horse and entertainment

for myself from every outpost and camp on my thirty-five mile ride during that morning. I was welcomed at every point, and traded news for cigarettes, picking up more camp gossip to peddle further on; and I invariably found the British officer a royal good fellow.

During my ride I had ample opportunity to revolve in my mind the subject of the Censorship—an English institution—and a new license. I vaguely felt that, somehow, Lord Stanley could be "worked." Lord Roberts being the highest authority, it was evident that the trick was to be done through him. How to ingratiate myself with the Field Marshal was the next question. A brilliant idea was that, as I had heard that Lord Roberts' chief aversion was a cat, perhaps it would be well to bribe a Kaffir to loosen a bagful on the river bank by his headquarters; then I would rush gallantly in, snatch the creatures by the necks or tails, and bear them off to destruction. But this scheme seemed impracticable, so I cast about for another, which I found, after a little thought, in the Field Marshal's chief weakness, which was chickens; but he had issued an order against looting, and this was a bar to my securing his favorite food. On my return to Paardeburg I had two healthy fowls packed away in my feed-bag; but don't for a moment think I rushed up to "Bobs" with my prize. Not a bit of it. Better than finding a way to ingratiate myself with that great man, I had found a way for Lord Stanley to do his chief a little but valued favor. So to the Censor, with my compliments, the chickens were given; they cost me four shillings each, but I told Lord Stanley I had looted them. I knew he would not "give me away," and I rightly guessed he would turn them over to his cook and invite "Bobs" to dinner that night.

For the next three weeks, from every long ride to telegraphic base or to reconnoitre for "The Times," I returned

with one or more feathered companions. At times, when it was advisable, I withheld them a day or two. Meanwhile, tied with a cord to a cart-wheel, they strutted about in their limited area, roosting at night on an axle; and as, daily, I grew in favor and popularity at headquarters, I fondly watched my feathered charges, and with their every peck at oats, scattered from carelessly-filled feed-bags, I saw the greatest English institution of slow growth gradu-

Major Congreve, who won the Victoria Cross with Lieutenant Roberts, son of the Field Marshal, when Lieutenant Roberts was killed in the effort to save Buller's guns at Colenso.

ally undermined, and a very perceptible wobbling of the lofty towers of Westminster.

During my first ride back to Modder I followed the river to where the road branched southwest to Jacobsdal. I had now about fifteen miles farther to go. Familiarity with the map, however, told me that a straighter path across the virgin veldt would cut off at least five miles. The country was as flat as a billiard-table, the day was in-

tensely hot, the sky perfectly cloudless. Straight ahead, apparently just above the horizon, I saw inverted in the sky a perfect picture of the trees and station buildings at Modder River.

It was a mirage. I had seen many mirages in Alaska, and in the Karroo Desert from the car-windows. I knew that this one showed me the direction, suggesting the shortest distance in a straight line. So I broke a new trail across the veldt and saved an hour's time, thereby beating a rival rider for another London paper who had started simultaneously with me from Paardeburg. Returning the following day, I joined a transport convoy just starting for Paardeburg. The commander, Colonel Umphelby, was about to go on to Jacobsdal. I told him of the new way and the saving it would effect, and he followed my advice. A week later, while on my second ride, I found that others had followed in the new road his cart-wheels had tracked, and that the virgin veldt through which I had broken my trail that morning had since become a broad and well-defined highway, a thousand cart-wheels having cut a path through the sod, churning it into mud, after which it had sun-baked until the road was hard and solid, while ten thousand hoof-marks between the tracks and on each side marked the road, straight as an arrow, ten miles across the open veldt, where but a week before only straggly grass, Karroo-bush and grazing cattle or cast-off horses were to be seen.

On Tuesday morning, February 27, while returning to Paardeburg, after carrying despatches to Modder River, I heard loud cheering from the brigade encamped at Klip Drift as I passed within a half mile of their quarters. Riding a dozen miles farther, I met Amery coming at full speed. Connecting this with the incident of the troops cheering, I rightly guessed that Cronje had surrendered.

Amery stopped when he came up to me, scribbled a short letter, exchanged horses with me, and I turned back to the Modder again. Somewhere on the veldt half a dozen other riders were on their way to the same point. I had already ridden twenty-five miles that day, but there was no help for it—back I had to go; and, although I got my despatches in ahead of the others, I felt that a hard gallop of over fifty miles was a big enough price to pay for the honor.

As there would still be several hours before sunset, I decided to start back again for Paardeburg the same day. Ten miles out found the quick night swooping down over the veldt, and fortunately I was near a farmhouse which had not been looted.

The De Villiers family, well known, and formerly very wealthy, were occupying this old homestead. They gladly gave me entertainment, hoping to get some news, for since the invasion of the Free State they had had none whatever. An old man, over eighty, was the only male member of the family at home; three women—his wife and two daughters and a child—made up the rest of the family. Only one servant remained—an old Kaffir "boy." They had lost three sons in the war—one killed, one captured, and the third, a mere boy, had gone off with some cattle, and had never been heard of since. The Imperial army, as it swept across this farm, had carried off or scattered four hundred head of cattle and two hundred horses, besides a thousand sheep. Thus in one week's time this prominent family was reduced from happiness and affluence to sorrow and poverty. During the evening I told them something of the siege of Cronje and what little I knew of his surrender. That this was a fact they refused to believe.

"Why," said one of the women, "how many men has Lord Roberts?"

I answered,

"About fifty thousand."

"Then Cronje will beat him!" was her reply.

"But," I said, "how can he, with only five thousand men?"

"Why," she answered, "whenever the Boers have had only one to ten against the English they have always beaten them. Look at Magersfontein, where Cronje had only four hundred men! And then remember Majuba!"

"Yes," I said, "yesterday was Majuba Day, and it was then that Cronje surrendered."

Then seeing that they were losing patience with me, and that my statements were making no impression, I changed the subject.

Early the next morning, as I was about to continue my journey, I saw a cavalcade coming along the road near the house. When it drew closer I called the old farmer and his family out, and together we saw General Cronje, his wife, secretary and eldest son, drive past in a carriage, surrounded by a heavy escort of mounted City Imperial Volunteers, the crack London corps. When they had passed, the old farmer went into the house, and a few minutes afterward I found him sitting in the kitchen, his head and arms on the table, sobbing bitterly, while the women were walking frantically to and fro, repeating to each other, "Oh, we never thought it would come to this!" "Now we will never be able to beat the English!" and so on indefinitely, showing that their immediate misfortunes had been completely forgotten in their greater grief over the loss of their country's independence, which they seemed to realize was bound to follow Cronje's surrender.

It struck me as being very odd—even as having a ludicrous side—this old-fashioned outburst of patriotism; yet it was very touching, and I rode away feeling rather de-

pressed. Coming near to Klip Drift again, I saw a long line of men approaching over a distant ridge, straggling along in closer order than troops ever marched, and without their regular formation. They looked like a swarm of locusts creeping over the veldt. At Klip Drift they halted, and I saw that this was Cronje's army, marching under guard to Modder River, to be sent to Cape Town by rail. They were given British rations of tinned corned-beef and biscuits while they sat on the ground where they halted, armed Tommies standing guard all around, while several regiments lay nearby on the grass, rifles in hand, in constant readiness should the prisoners prove troublesome. Off at one side several hundred of the women-prisoners were grouped about a few wagons, and I could see that there were children, and even babies, among them. Then I rode on to Paardeburg, past hundreds of carcasses of horses, bullocks and mules which lined the path of the army and gave out their intolerable odors to pollute the glorious atmosphere. Here and there were abandoned and broken-down trek-carts; occasional patches of veldt covered with shining but empty tin biscuit-boxes, indicated where the army had halted for a meal. A few flocks of asvogels (vultures), perched on masses of putrefaction, flopped awkwardly out of my way as I galloped on. Toward evening I was back in the correspondents' camp by the Modder, with the oppressive impression still strong and vivid before my eyes induced by that quietly-eating army of prisoners sitting under the hot sun back at Klip Drift.

In camp I found that Major Pollock and Amery had passed me on their way to the Modder, Amery going back to Cape Town to resume his duties as base correspondent, and Pollock for supplies and with despatches. Landon was still at headquarters, and our mess had been increased by the addition of Mr. Young of the Manchester "Guardian,"

a young musical critic who had been sent out to write war stories. Verily, war correspondents are sometimes carved out of queer woods. Young was a splendid fellow, very impracticable, æsthetic to a fault, and quite a dreamer. His servants and his outfit were taken care of by Major Pollock during the rest of the campaign until we reached Bloemfontein, when our mess broke up entirely.

CHAPTER XV.

CRONJE'S LAAGER AND HIS SURRENDER.

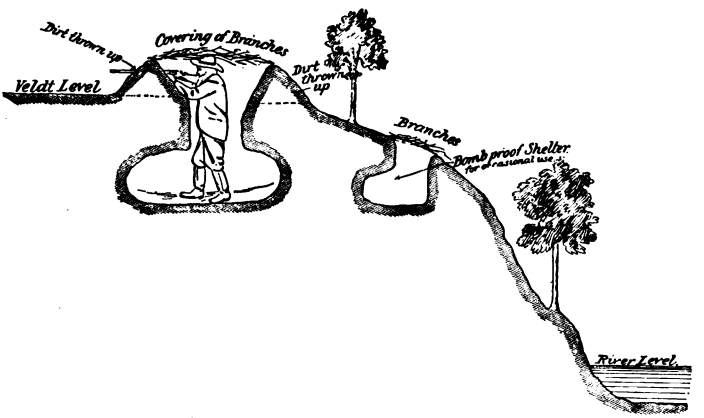
CRONJE'S offer to surrender had been made at daybreak, and the formal ceremony was performed later. It seems he had already decided to give up. In the morning, about three hours before sunrise, a party of the Canadian troops, aided by sappers of the Royal Engineers, had succeeded, under cover of darkness, in entrenching a position within two hundred yards of the laager, flanking the Boer trenches in such a manner as to make them untenable when daylight came. About ten of the Canadians and forty of the Boers were killed, and a few more wounded in the short but sharp fighting which preceded the offer to surrender.

The number of Boers in the laager was a matter of much speculation before the surrender. The farmers and Boer prisoners already taken said the number could not exceed eight or nine hundred, for Cronje had sent part of his command off in different directions to the north and south when he started on his unfortunate retreat up the Modder River. The actual total number of prisoners taken was 4090, of whom 1327 were Free Staters. The sick and wounded numbered only 163. Despite the terrific bombardment, the number of men killed in the laager was only 87. For the capture of the prisoners and their two hundred women and children Lord Roberts paid a high price, losing nearly two thousand men, more than five hundred of whom were buried at Paardeburg in long, broad trenches outlined with stones from the Spy Kopje above, the hill from which Lords Roberts

and Kitchener watched the hell of shrapnel and lyddite concentrated over the Boer laager, and from the base of which the forgotten Tommies, in their shallow graves, will continue to guard the scene of England's great "avenging" of Majuba. Six guns were taken in a more or less dismantled condition—four nine-pounders, one Vickers-Maxim or "pom-pom," and one ordinary Maxim. With General Cronje was General Wolmerans and Commandants Albrecht, Russe, Maartans, Juste, Woest and Kok. Excepting the leaders, the prisoners were obviously glad to be captured as a release from the terrors of the laager.

After the surrender, Young and I visited the scene; but we did not remain long, for, despite the freshet which had washed most of the carcasses in the river-bed down the stream, there were sufficient scattered about on the level of the veldt to make the place pestilential with foul odors. We could not cross the river, so we satisfied ourselves with an examination of that portion of the laager extending along the south side of the river and what we could see by looking across. The banks of the stream were thirty to forty feet high where the water had cut its way through the clay to the bed-rock beneath. On the south bank were two sets of trenches, one on the veldt level, and another for reserve use on the steep slope of the river bank. They were from two to three feet broad, eight to ten feet long, and five or six feet deep, generally covered with tree-branches as sunshades, and were broadened out on each side at the bottom; these were the bomb-proof trenches, and the low number of casualties are sufficient certificates of their effectiveness. On the opposite bank there was a series of trenches halfway down to the water's edge, constructed in the same manner. Both banks were covered with trees, and numberless well-worn paths from the trenches showed that the Boers must not only have used water for drinking, but

Cronje's Laager at Paardeburg. Sketched by the author after the surrender.



Sectional View of Trenches in Cronje's Laager at Paardeburg, south bank of Modder River. Sketched by the author after the surrender.

also for lavatory purposes, despite all British assertions to the contrary.

On the veldt level above the north bank was another small line of trenches, behind which still stood about a hundred trek-carts, mostly shattered by the shell-fire from the British artillery. A brick barn with one end blown out by lyddite stood at the right, while on a ridge still farther back were more trenches. The Canadian advance on the morning of the surrender was to flank these trenches, and they did enfilade them terribly. At the extreme right of the laager a few wagons in the water at the drift showed the attempt to cross the river at that point. Beyond, in the dim distance, the inevitable horizon rim of irregular blue-brown kopjes framed this picture of desolation.

I walked along the bank and picked up a few fragments of Boer shells and bullets, and, after climbing down into several of the trenches, I was no longer surprised at the failure of the terrific bombardment to do more damage. To any one lying under the overhanging sides of the trenches the heaviest shells exploding overhead were harmless. Even the lyddite failed to achieve its expected slaughter by concussion, and save for its ability to set fire to the wagons, and thus destroy supplies, it was not much more effective than ordinary shrapnel. The suffocating effect of the lyddite fumes was successfully counteracted by drinking vinegar, of which the burghers had a plentiful supply.

I was struck by the sharp contrast presented by the abandoned camps of the two opposing armies. The track of the Imperial force was marked by waste and extravagance. Empty meat- and biscuit-tins fairly paved the veldt, while on every side the half-consumed remains of slaughtered cattle were to be seen. In the enemy's camps evidences were found that the Boers lived largely on cereals, carried in sacks; they always saved the hides of slaughtered

animals, and during their leisure hours put them through some process of preservation for future use. Of course nothing of this kind was done at Paardeburg. *Apropos* of the nauseating smells of the laager and the entire Modder River trek, I have noticed that the more highly organized the carcass, the more offensive the odor. The most numerous bodies were those of bullocks, which, being grass-eaters, were not as offensive as those of the grain-eating horses. Both were less offensive than the carcasses of dogs or pigs. But a thousand times worse than all the others combined was the nauseating, weakening, nerve-destroying effluvium that arose from the three-foot-deep soil loosely covering the bodies of two hundred members of the Highland Brigade buried in the trenches around Spy Kopje. As man is the highest development of the animal kingdom when living, so, when dead, he is the most offensive combination of all decaying organisms. While I was still at the laager, a large trench, almost a cave, was found containing the dead bodies of fifty burghers. The workers were unable to remove them, and the cave was filled up, burying them all *en masse*. It is needless to say I did not inspect the cave.

The next day we heard of the relief of Ladysmith. This, with the capture of Cronje's army, the relief of Kimberley, and the evacuation of Stormberg and Colesberg by the Boers in less than two weeks, it was generally thought, by the staff of correspondents and headquarters attachés, would so depress the Boers as to entirely break up their very loosely-organized armies and end the war within a few weeks.

The souvenirs I collected during this visit to the laager at Paardeburg I placed in an empty shrapnel shell, which I found at the same place. I found a cap which fitted over the shell, and the whole made a very compact and neat

relic. This, together with a box of the Queen's chocolates, some Boer Bibles, and a number of other relics, I put in a handsome dress-suit case, which I left at the railway station at Modder River. Afterward I moved it up to Kimberley, where I left it in charge of the manager of the Grand Hotel.

When about to leave South Africa I had not time to go back to Kimberley to get my baggage, and so telegraphed to have it sent to me. It never came. Instead, I received a telegram saying, "It cannot be found." Additional letters, telegrams, and services of Consuls and attorneys have had no effect; my valise still remains at Kimberley, and with it the choicest of my souvenirs. The contents are worth possibly ten pounds. I have spent at least that much in the effort to regain it. The moral of this is,—when travelling, especially in war time, never become separated from your luggage.

CHAPTER XVI.

OSFONTEIN AND SOME EXASPERATING EXPERIENCES.

THE next move of Lord Roberts' army was to Osfontein, and Roberts selected as headquarters the very farmhouse at which I had been entertained eight days before by the K. O. S. B. Regiment. The correspondents got in motion a little later than headquarters, and it was nearly dark before the first of us drove up to the farm. Being familiar with the ground, I rode rapidly around, and found two other newspaper outfits already camping on a beautiful stretch of green turf—ideal golfing ground—just in rear of the farmhouse. I had "The Times" cortége of two Cape-carts, one spring-wagon, one trek-cart, six oxen and twelve horses draw off at one side, and while the Kaffir boys were getting supper, Mr. Young and I, under the direction of Major Pollock, put up our tent. About eight o'clock, just as it was getting dark, a very new Colonel attached to headquarters rode up and curtly informed us that we were directly behind the firing-line. He asked us who had given us permission to camp there, and then ordered the entire lot of us off to another spot. Then he carefully selected the most disagreeable and unreachable place he could find, moved us off in the darkness through a swamp, across a brook, over a stone wall at which every obstinate horse balked, forced us to pull down our tents, reload our wagons, leave our half-prepared suppers, and utterly waste about three hours of our precious time, while this would-be-important-officer rode furiously around, thundering orders and playing the fool generally. It was an expe-

rience not calculated to put the staff of correspondents in the most amiable frame of mind. When we finally got down to coffee and cigarettes, about midnight, this officer was carefully discussed and his future was prepared. One old war-horse, who in twenty years' campaigning had never been treated so harshly, swore he would have the Colonel's

Mr. Mackern, an enterprising American Photographer, representing "Scribner's Magazine," finds a slight elevation better suited to procure the best results on his plates. He uses a stereoscopic camera, taking two pictures at once.

scalp, sooner or later. Others suggested milder forms of torture. Each determined to have his blood some time; I am at it now. The following morning we were delighted to learn that he had got a roasting from "Bobs" for exceeding his authority. But even that did not soften our wrath. We all vowed to carefully remember his name,—no, I shall not give it here; our object in remembering it is that it

shall be forgotten. Neither in this campaign nor in any other may that officer ever hope to have his name mentioned in cable or letter by any war correspondent, however meritorious the services he may render his country, for the correspondents all stand together, and in secret his name will go down to successive generations of pencil-pushers as the never-to-be-mentioned-man who in so unheard of a manner outraged the dignity and for a whole night made superlatively uncomfortable the entire staff of correspondents attached to Lord Roberts' headquarters. The man's career, so far as newspapers count in such things, is undoubtedly finished. The firing-line he pointed out was about fifty yards from Lord Roberts' dinner-table that evening—a statement sufficient to show what an ass the Colonel was. The next morning he came around among our carts to make his peace with us, evidently realizing the enormity of his mistake. He was received with silence, and the general frigidity of the atmosphere caused him to leave quickly. It was then that I learned what "a fatuous ass" was. That's what I heard Landon call him.

During our midnight dinner, while half a dozen other correspondents were sitting around "The Times" table, I heard one of them say, "I heard that Captain Montmorency was killed the other day at Stormberg." I then told them of my experience as one of his scouts, and added, by way of conclusion, that he was the first personal friend I had lost in this war.

This was so unusual a statement for a correspondent to make that it drew forth general comment, for all of the others had lost many of their dearest friends. Happily for me, in addition to not having any direct national interest in the war, so far I had been spared a share of the personal sorrows also. The next week was to change all this for me in a peculiarly exceptional manner.

From Osfontein I made my last ride to Modder River with despatches. The distance was now forty-two miles—quite a task for one horse, when returning on the same animal was imperative. According to the importance of my messages I always took the best horse in the lot, or held it in reserve for a more important occasion. Starting late in the afternoon, in company with Colonel Walker, of Lord Roberts' staff, who rode with me to Paardeburg Drift, I pushed on to Klip Kraal, where I was to deliver a note from the Field Marshal to Colonel Paget, in command of a

Transport cart stuck in mud at a "drift" or ford, a familiar scene during the march. Two bullocks have been left to draw the empty cart along after it has been unloaded. The other bullocks have been distributed among other carts to take the place of used-up animals, scores of which dropped dead every day.

few regiments posted there, and guarding the line of communications. I was always especially glad to carry these official messages because they empowered me to exact entertainment for myself and horse, so I was able to travel with nothing but a mackintosh and my saddle. I had not even a water canteen or supply of emergency rations in my saddle-wallets, for these were usually stuffed with letters from the dozens of friends I had made, generally including a thick packet from Lord Stanley for headquarters. Stanley I had found to be a conscientious hard worker, holding a

most difficult position, for the Press Censor was constantly confronted with a thousand difficulties and misunderstandings which his very energetic and professionally jealous staff of war correspondents had thrust upon him. The situation was one that required the greatest tact and diplomacy, and really a better man than Lord Stanley to fill the position could not have been found. It was a thankless job, for in spite of the best intentions to deal justice all around, Lord Stanley was forced under the pressure of necessity to offend at one time or other almost every one of the newspaper men, and I was not surprised to hear in London that with the press he was the most unpopular man in South Africa. That this should be was inevitable; but let me add my humble testimony that from personal contact with the gentleman for some months I am certain that his loss of newspaper favor was altogether a result of his position, and not in the least of his personality. All correspondents who were under his control received favors or courtesies at some time or other that made personal attacks upon him by any of them decidedly bad taste.

But back to my ride. Colonel Paget and his officers contributed more letters to my wallets and the usual dose of whiskey and soda to my body. The soda-generating sparklet-bottle had penetrated into every mess outfit on the veldt, and of course where bread and meat was found, near by was always to be found a few bottles of Canadian Club or Scotch whiskey. Before reaching Colonel Paget's command I caught up with the Hon. Robert Beresford, of the "Central News." He said he was not carrying despatches, —an unlikely thing for a correspondent travelling westward. He borrowed my whip, with which to pound his horse into shape for a few moments, and then with an enterprise characteristic of American journalism galloped on ahead of me, and that was the last I saw of my whip until a week

later, after Bloemfontein was taken. Luckily my despatches were not sufficiently important to make another man's getting to the wire a few hours ahead of me of much moment. But it was a lesson, and after that I took care not to lend either horse, whip or spurs, or even information regarding routes, to anyone who might possibly prove to be a rival rider in disguise.

Leaving Klip Kraal, another eight miles brought me in the darkness and rain to Klip Drift, where I gathered up a new batch of letters from the officers and men of the Highland Light Infantry posted there, took a hastily-prepared midnight luncheon with the gentlemen in a rough shelter composed of blankets stretched over small peach trees, and then, after the Colonel went to sleep on the table, I napped until 3 A. M. in his arm-chair, commandeered from a neighboring farmhouse. When the sergeant who had taken care of my horse woke me it had stopped raining, and I galloped off in the darkness toward Modder. Breakfast-time brought me to the De Villiers farm, ten miles out. Here I ordered supper and engaged bedroom accommodations. I reached Modder Station in time to get the letters off on the last weekly mail train and filed my cable despatches in time for the evening editions.

Then I looked about for Beresford and my whip, but they were not to be found. I decided to rest myself and horse until toward evening, to escape the heat of midday. Suddenly I met one of "The Times'" servants. He had driven in the day before, and had killed one of our horses in so doing. After a few hours I gave up the attempt to buy a new horse, and decided to give him mine to help drive back the cart with supplies, though this would make me a day late in returning. To do this and yet return at once myself placed me in a dilemma from which a little enterprise, assisted by good luck, freed me. I had no-

ticed a distinguished-looking gentleman in semi-civilian attire unloading a Cape-cart and three horses from a railway truck. Assuming that he was a correspondent, I entered into conversation with him; he proved to be Mr. Alfred Hutton, the Reuter's correspondent, who had made a sensational escape from Ladysmith. He had just come around from Natal, and was anxious to reach headquarters at Osfontein, and readily agreed to take me along for a guide, while "The Times" cart used my own horse to follow the next day more leisurely.

The Foreign Military Attachés on the March. Representatives of all the Friendly Powers are entertained as attachés to the Field Marshal's Staff during the Military Operations. Captain Slocum, of the United States Army, rides the white horse at the extreme left.

But Hutton and I fathomed the lowermost depths of exasperation before reaching headquarters two days later. He had bought a new outfit at Cape Town, and had had a balky horse unloaded on him by a rascally dealer. After two hours' effort, aided by half a dozen obliging Tommies and several non-combatant Free State Boers, we got the brute started. Hutton rode a few yards ahead, while I drove and the servant wielded the heavy sjambok or rhinoceros-hide whip. The purpose was to keep the horse going without a moment's stop, and alternately galloping

and trotting we succeeded for nine miles. Then, as we were looking for De Villiers' farm, the abrupt night fell upon us and left us lost on the veldt. Following the direction of a fire in the distance, we came to a convoy by the river, a mile or more from the farm. The officer in charge of the convoy was Colonel Umphelby, of the Royal Australian Artillery, and on his invitation we decided to camp for the night with him. This was the same officer who a week before, at my suggestion, had broken a new road across the virgin veldt, and, strangely enough, I had overtaken him while on the same road. With him was Lieutenant Waite, one of the few "Rankers," or officers promoted from the ranks, I met in the army. Lieutenant Keswick, of the 12th Lancers, was also travelling in company with the convoy to headquarters. Lieutenant Hilliard, Aide-de-Camp to Governor Milner of Cape Colony, was a young diplomatic attaché on his way to headquarters, presumably with official documents. Hutton and I made up the remainder of this little midnight supper party, the third in succession that I had had. Colonel Umphelby roused us all at daybreak, and while the convoy was getting in motion I rode on to the De Villiers farm to order the supper to be recooked that I had missed the night before, with suitable additions for the entire party. Hutton succeeded in getting the balky horse that far, and soon afterward the rest came up also. Colonel Umphelby had only time for a cup of coffee and a few eggs, but the rest of the party stayed for several hours, revelling in the quantities of fresh milk and tender young chickens which Madam De Villiers had prepared for us. The exquisite Hilliard, anxious to show all possible kindness and freedom from personal aversion to his hospitable enemies, lifted the little three-year-old child, placed her on his knee, and inquired the cause of her incessant crying.

"Oh, it's nothing," said the old lady; "the doctor said she has the chicken-pox; but," she added, as Hilliard put the child on the floor quickly, yet with a grave diplomatic diginity, "you needn't be afraid—it's not catching." Nevertheless the Lieutenant did not take up the youngster again, but addressed his courtesies to the other members of the

Lieutenant-Colonel Umphelby, Royal Australian Artillery, killed at Driefontein.

family during the rest of our stay. The meal was well worth the one pound in English gold I paid Madame on leaving; and, rightly thinking that it was worth my while to have these gentlemen as my guests on this occasion, I insisted on their not contributing a shilling toward the bill.

Just before we left I spoke of Montmorency's death and my freedom from other losses of friends. Lieutenant Kes-

wick remarked that any of us might go next; and, half in earnest and half in jest, we agreed, in case of accident, to meet again in spirit on some future occasion. A few weeks later I entertained Lieutenant Waite at dinner, again, at Kimberley. Lieutenant Hilliard gave me a champagne dinner at the Mount Nelson in Cape Town, and just before my return to America Hutton was my guest for another meal in London; but within the week Lieutenant Keswick was killed at Poplar Grove, and a shrapnel shell tore away part of Colonel Umphelby's head at Driefontein.

The party broke up after breakfast ended, and Hutton and I pushed on ahead of the convoy. Once more the balky horse halted in a bed of wet sand, and it was four hours before he started again. We were thirty-six hours going the forty-two miles to headquarters. All through a long, wet and sultry day Hutton and I and his servant struggled with the three horses. Recent rains had made the roads almost impassable. The two decent horses were thoroughly "bedeviled" by the balky single brute; under the saddle he threw all three of us separately over his head. When changed to the cart again he spilled Hutton and me collectively into the mud. We did not swear; the case was too awful for mere profanity. But enough of that dreary, damp, perspiring and exasperating day. After exhausting every conceivable way of starting the horse, we all three rode inside of the cart and tied the brute behind, where he followed quietly, having got what he had been working for.

Arriving at Paardeburg, a terrific storm overtook us, and we took refuge in the deserted commissariat building, a looted farmhouse by the drift. Here we stabled our horses in the parlor, slept and ate in the general living-room, while an abandoned artillery horse quietly died in the kitchen, his galled and famished mate standing, watery-eyed

and neighing, just outside, while the lightning-flashes startled the intense darkness into "biograph" pictures of the veldt under a storm, the silver rain-drops appearing to be permanently attached to their positions in the air. After burning several doors and window-frames to cook our supper, we slept on the floor, lying in serpent-like curves to avoid the dripping streams of water from the leaky corrugated roof overhead; and Hutton told me tales of the siege of Ladysmith and of his escape through rain and swollen rivers, of being nearly drowned in the Tugela, skirting Boer laagers in the night, hiding in friendly Kaffir kraals by day while his pursuers scouted the surrounding hills for him, being plainly in his sight through a crack in the reed walls of the hut;—how three Boers rode up to this very hut and demanded milk from the owners, drinking it while he lay under a pile of clothing inside; afterward traversing snake-infested jungles, narrowly escaping being shot by both Boer and British sentinels, and so on, until I fell asleep, as pleased as though twelve years old again, with Robinson Crusoe and a forbidden dark lantern for bed-companions.

Among other tales, Hutton told me how he had written a long cable message and entrusted it, with his last and best horse, to a Kaffir, whom he sent out into the night to find a way through the Boer lines to the British camp and the telegraph-office beyond. After his escape he learned that the Kaffir had never reached his destination. His fate—whether he was killed or captured—was unknown. Hutton supposed the Kaffir was safe, but was not inclined to be reconciled to the loss of the horse, which, as he said, "Was a valuable animal, brought out from England."

Months afterward, while dining Hutton, I was able to tell him a remarkable tale of how I had discovered the

sequel of his story. Truly, the world of men and things is, after all, very small.

When we left the deserted house at Paardeburg Drift at sunrise the horse inside was dead. Its companion was still quietly grazing outside. At any place between there and Modder a dozen abandoned horses or mules were seen, having been cast off by their owners or escaped. The veldt is very niggardly of food supplies, and after a few days these brutes became hopelessly run down and not worth the trouble of commandeering. Native horses, however, have the faculty of living off the veldt, and, when possible, I always made it the rule to ride one. The saddle-galls, caused by overloading the British horses, were the most frightful sores I have ever seen. Extending for six to ten inches along the backbone, the excreta of the soreness oozed out, creeping up toward the neck and down toward the tail, running down the sides, and forming an immense V-shaped scab on each side, until the mere sight of one of these poor creatures from a distance was as sickening as a visit to the laager. Hutton and I intended to re-examine Cronje's last stronghold, but the place had become too pestilential, so we hurried on to Osfontein, arriving there in time for breakfast on the third day after starting from Modder. The supply-cart came in the next day with two more horses used up. Two of our servants had deserted, leaving us only four; a number of our horses were sick, and we had difficulty in finding enough to ride without holding a few in reserve, as was our custom, for despatch-riding.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TURNING POINT OF THE WAR—THE BATTLE OF POPLAR GROVE.

THE entire army had taken up new positions, with Osfontein as a centre. The Boer laager was about six miles eastward, the entrenchments extending over fourteen miles in front of the Imperial army. The official estimate of their strength was twelve thousand. The correspondents more conservatively figured that there were seven thousand. All agreed that about thirty thousand Boers were concentrating at this point, having been drawn there from Ladysmith and other districts under General Joubert. A big battle was imminent, and it was expected to be the final battle of the war. All the British hoped the Boers would make a decided stand, not doubting that a crushing defeat would be administered that would completely break the backbone of all further opposition. The correspondents made elaborate preparations to cover the battle. For days they had been working in conjunction with the intelligence department in securing details for the production of a perfect map, which was afterward pronounced to be the most complete plan of the positions in existence. I found time and opportunity to make two copies of this.

The correspondents' camp had been moved from the dismal swamp in which the officious Colonel with the unmentionable name had placed us, and now we were delightfully camped on a clean stretch of turf. Our nearest neighbors were Messrs. Gwynne and Hutton, representing Reuter's agency; a little farther on was Battersby, of the "Morning Post;" beyond was Villiers, of the "Illustrated

News;" and still farther was Julian Ralph. Only a few more were scattered about, for the latest order from headquarters, compelling us to bring up all our supplies from Modder Station and refusing to issue us other rations than fresh meat, had made the expense of keeping up with the army enormous, and many had dropped out of line, waiting to catch up again when Bloemfontein should be taken. We were all grouped within the Osfontein Kraal, a large enclosure for cattle, hedged about by an impenetrable barrier of enormous aloes century plants. A week before, when I had first visited this place as a guest of the Scottish Borderers, the hedge was surmounted by thousands of tall, stately blossom-stalks bearing the century flower, twenty feet or more above the ground. Unfortunately for the beauty of this hedge, and fortunately for the camp *chefs*, these stalks made excellent fuel; so now only their unsightly stumps and the countless sharp-pointed leaves remained, forming as impassable an abattis as any which ancient or modern military ingenuity could construct. With our tent erected, and a wide spread of canvas between two wagons to keep off the sun, we were once more comfortably housed. Lord Roberts and his Chief of Staff, Lord Kitchener, had gone to Kimberley for a few days. Meanwhile, preparations for the great battle went on, and I had two days' rest in camp, with an opportunity to write letters and take care of my colony of hens, having brought four more along in Hutton's cart from the De Villiers farm. We ate one that had a broken leg, but kept the rest for the Press Censor and "Bobs."

Early on the morning of March 7th the general attack on the Boer positions took place. During the night General French's cavalry brigade had moved from its position on the north bank of the river at Koodoosrand, behind the rear of Lord Roberts' headquarters at Osfontein, to make

the attack from the right instead of the left flank, where naturally the enemy would expect this movement.

At sunrise, after a bombardment of the seven kopjes by the naval guns, the Sixth Division, General Kelly-Kenny's, drove the enemy from their position. They fled northward along the line of their entrenchments, circling around

General Kelly-Kenny, of the Sixth Division, and the Duke of Marlborough at the headquarters of the former in Bloemfontein. The photograph was taken about three weeks after the Battle of Poplar Grove.

Reed's farm and then going due east along the line of kopjes, where there were numerous smaller laagers. Beyond the pointed kopje they crossed an open plain for three miles, fighting a rear-guard action with small artillery and one big gun. A halt was made at the big kopje near the river, where a large dam furnished breastworks behind which a decisive stand was made for several hours, success-

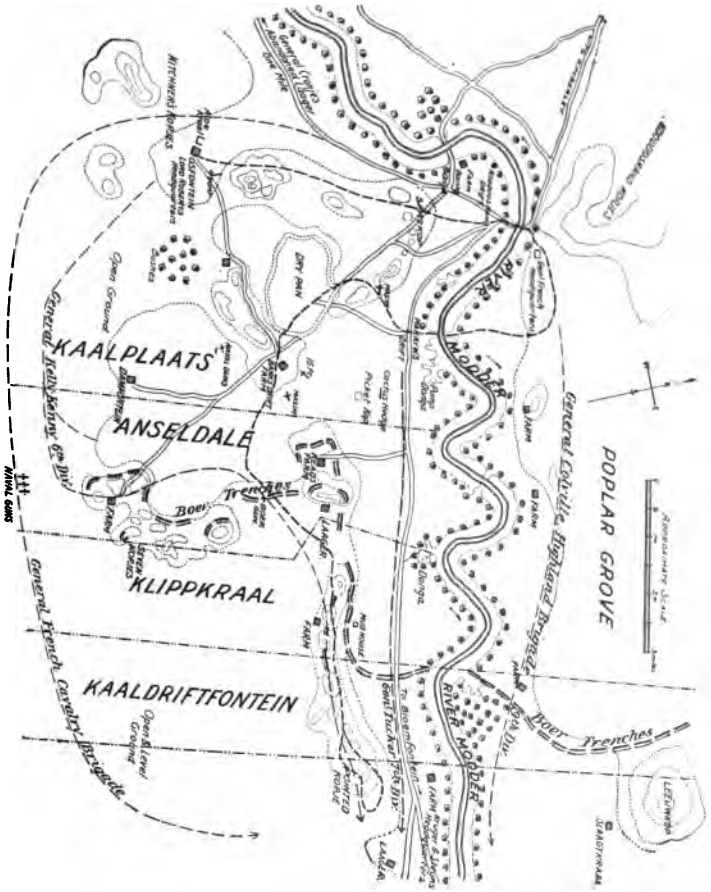
fully preventing several flank movements of the Imperial cavalry by shelling and once driving back in complete rout a regiment of mounted infantry from Tucker's division which had attempted a charge. This was probably one of the last charges in history by cavalry or mounted troops against modern weapons in the hands of white soldiers in a fortified position.

General Colville with the Ninth Division was on the north bank of the river, creeping slowly up on the Boer entrenchments on that side, while General Tucker's Seventh Division, assisted by the big yellow military balloon, was on the south bank. A few of the mounted infantry were killed, and General French also lost a few men. The casualties were very few and of no consequence in comparison with the slaughter the Boers could have inflicted had they remained in their trenches. It was General French's great flanking movement which filled them with fear of another Paardeburg, for during the advance the great mass of the entire Imperial army was in plain sight on the veldt before the Boer position, and their swarming numbers seemed much greater than they really were.

Toward sundown the British scouts succeeded in reaching the last position of Boer defence only to find the enemy well beyond reach, and darkness put an end to the battle and pursuit. The real purpose of the advance failed completely. General French found his horses too exhausted to complete his attempt to get behind the Boer position before daybreak; when he again started next morning he was halted in mid-veldt by a small detachment of Boers, who successfully prevented his farther advance all day.

Generals Roberts and Kitchener were quartered during the action at a farm about two miles east of Osfontein, and were in telegraphic and heliographic communication with the dif-

THE BATTLE OF POPLAR GROVE



Plan of Boer Positions and English Attack at Poplar Grove. Copied by author from map prepared by war correspondents of "The Times" before the battle, and nearly destroyed by water during his mishap while crossing the Modder River during the fighting.

ferent commands throughout the battle. At night headquarters moved on to Poplar Grove farm, between Pointed Kopje and the river, twelve miles from Osfontein. Presidents Steyn and Krüger had been there earlier in the day, and had French carried out his orders, both of them would have been captured. Colonel Gourko and Lieutenant Thompson—Russian and Hollander—military attachés with the Boers, were captured here when the British advanced, having chosen to remain with their broken cart to avoid losing their personal effects. The Boers fled east and northeast across the river in wild confusion; and, had the

Pursuing the Enemy at Poplar Grove. The artillery advancing to take up new positions. The cavalry and mounted infantry in the background.

British been able to follow, they might have crossed the Vaal River into Transvaal territory six weeks earlier than they did, and thus have prevented the destruction of several hundred miles of railway between Bloemfontein and the boundary.

After spending the night in writing letters and preparing despatches I started the following morning for Kimberley, forty-five miles away. During this battle of Poplar Grove, or rout, as it proved to be, and which greater homogeneity among the Boers could have turned into a terrible defeat for the British, I was so fortunate as to get to almost every point of interest at the right time during the day, although

the action was spread over twenty miles of country, the British advancing fifteen miles eastward.

By Landon's orders, given to our servants the night before, we were roused at 3 o'clock in the morning. While we drank our coffee and put a few biscuits and tins of meat in our wallets, we could hear the dull murmur of the Cavalry Brigade passing by our rear on its way to the right flank, the creaking of harness-chains and artillery-wheels, occasional subdued cries of native drivers, neighing horses or low commands mingling in a low, hoarse roar, like a strong, steady wind through high trees at night.

At 4 A.M. Major Pollock and I rode northward from Osfontein, crossing the drift at Koodoosrand on a pontoon bridge at daybreak. Several miles farther travel brought us to General French's old headquarters, and shortly afterward we reached General Colville's headquarters. There had been considerable mystery regarding the plans, as only "Bobs" knew what the tactics of the day were to be.

Nevertheless, we learned that Colville's division was to take a passive part, more to prevent the enemy from retreating westward on the north bank than to do any fighting. Major Pollock, by agreement, was to cover this end of the battle for "The Times" during the remainder of the day, while I was to ride along the entire advance-line back to the right flank, there to meet Landon, who had gone on with General French.

Leaving the Major, I rode on to Makouw's Drift, so named for the last great native chief who opposed the advance of the early Boer trekers. I was hesitating to ford the river, which was greatly swollen from the recent rains, when a cavalryman rode up and undertook to show me the way, assuring me that it was perfectly safe. When half-way across, our horses lost their footing. His horse,

being the larger, regained his footing immediately, but my little pony was carried downstream. Fifty yards below, the high banks of the river closed in perpendicularly; here there were dangerous rapids, and had I been caught in them my landing would have been impossible. The gallant little beast made a brave fight for the shore, reaching it just in time, though even then he had to wade back upstream thirty yards to the drift before he was able to leave the water. My letters and papers, including the map of the Boer positions, were thoroughly soaked, and I was compelled to halt on the bank and lose more than an hour while drying them in the sun. While doing so, I watched the operations of General Tucker's military balloon near by, saw it slowly ascend a thousand feet or more, held captive by a cable from a windlass on the balloon-cart, saw the messengers run to pick up the weighted envelopes containing information, dropped from the balloon above, and then gallop off to headquarters with them.

From Makouw's Drift, after drying my papers, though I was still soaked to the skin, I rode westward to a low kopje where a company of the Hampshires had a little Maxim gun. This was on the firing-line, although no action had yet taken place.

Heavy firing having continued for some time to the southward, I pushed on. Then I rode across the Dry Pan to Banks' farm, where I reached the summit of the low ridge just in time to see several hundred Boers galloping away in retreat from the Seven Sisters Kopjes, two miles distant, from which they had been dislodged by the fire of the lyddite guns and General Kelly-Kenny's advance. A few of the Lancers and Mounted Infantry were stationed here with a battery of two guns; these advanced soon afterward toward the deserted line of trenches. I rode with them until, seeing the whole of Kelly-Kenny's division coming on from the

right at a gallop, I turned to the left and climbed a kopje in order to get a better view.

Here I could also see part of Tucker's command in motion. The Boers had started to retreat along the line of their entrenchments, and two divisions of the Imperial army—horse, foot and artillery—were in pursuit. On they dashed at full speed, the infantry in long parallel lines of khaki streaming behind, clear and distinct, for several miles, the marvellously transparent atmosphere and bright sunlight making them as visible as though only a few hundred yards distant. The cavalry formation was less regular in

Artillery in Action. Sighting the 15-pound guns.

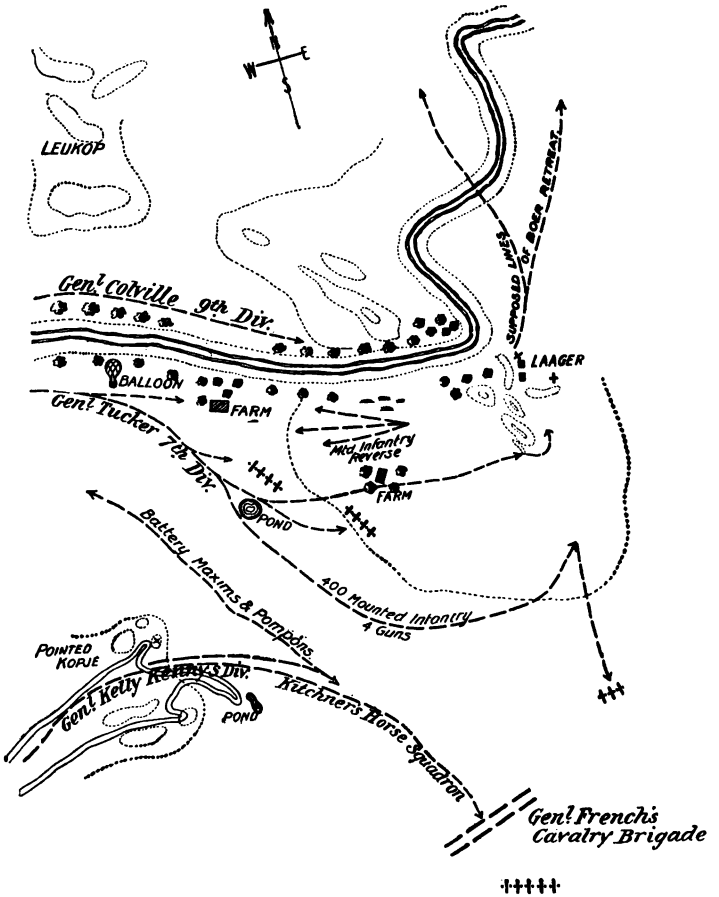
appearance, and the Colonial troops were especially distinguished by their whoops and hurrahs, interspersed with officers' shouted orders. It was little wonder that the Boers fled, for there were fully twenty thousand men in plain sight crossing this three-mile stretch of billiard-table veldt as fast as men and horses could go. The regulars advanced with a parade-like dignity quite Quaker-like in comparison with the Irregular Colonial forces.

In advance of the main body were several thin lines of scouts, fifty yards apart, sent on ahead to draw the fire of a possibly concealed enemy before the main army could come

within range. On reaching the ridge, they cautiously sent out a few of the scouts to discover any possible danger; finding none, they rushed on, over and down into the plain beyond, toward the farm south of the Mud House, where the second line of kopjes began to stretch eastward parallel to the river, a mile to the north. As the army came up, halted before the ridge, and then swept on, I stood watching the brilliant scene for an hour or more, while my pony munched the abundant grass at my feet. I knew that, as the firing-line was hurrying on, my duty was to follow; but the spectacle of that great army—two full divisions and half a dozen brigades, with artillery and cavalry manœuvring in actual pursuit of a terrorized enemy—was one so full of action in that wide and solemn expanse of grey-green veldt, bordered by red kopjes and blue skies, that I was semi-hypnotized until the clumsy and lumbering Red Cross ambulance-carts, dragging along in the rear of the khaki hosts, roused me to motion, and I galloped on ahead again. Near the Mud House a small number of Boers could be seen riding distractedly back and forth in different directions, fearful of being surrounded, until they finally disappeared among the kopjes. Midway on this plain I met my associates, Landon and Young, and we let the tide of battle sweep on while we sat down for our dinner among a a lot of abandoned Boer forage.

The Boers had one gun in rear-guard action during this retreat, and were dropping a great many shells among the Imperial forces. We were in the line of fire for a short time, and then the Boers dragged their gun along in their retreat without having effected any damage. At the conclusion of our cold lunch I became impatient and hurried on, leaving the other correspondents behind. I soon caught up with the troops, who had halted; I pushed on ahead of the scouts, and found another three-mile stretch of open

THE BATTLE OF POPLAR GROVE



Last Stand of the Burghers at Poplar Grove. Sketched by the author during action while watching manœuvres from × mark on Pointed Kopje.

veldt, terminating in a huge kopje, behind which the Boers were making a new stronghold in the empty dam at its foot. I climbed the Pointed Kopje, the last of this range, and from its summit had as beautiful a view of skirmishing for the remainder of the afternoon as ever greeted the eyes of a war correspondent. Below and around me was the level veldt; far off to the right General French's cavalry brigade lay motionless, recuperating for a night dash on Bloemfontein, and persuaded to wait by a small commando of Boers entrenched in the open, a few guns, meanwhile, booming lyddite at the laager behind the huge black kopje, three miles to the east, by the river. Kelly-Kenny's forces were behind me among the kopjes, while covering the mile of space to the river were the scattered forces of Tucker's division, creeping up into position again—cavalry ahead, artillery close behind—while the slow-moving infantry marched up from far in the rear. On the north side of the river the advanced lines of Colville's scouts could be dimly distinguished from the blurred surface of the veldt as they slowly advanced, looking like dotted parallel lines on a giant map. Between, the yellow military balloon, fastened a few feet above its cart, was cautiously moving eastward, waiting for orders to rise a thousand feet overhead and spy out the enemy's position and the positions of their guns.

I descended from the kopje to get water for my horse and myself at a pond a short distance ahead on the open veldt. Here I was at the same time in advance of Tucker's, Kelly-Kenny's and French's scouts, and between them all and the Boer laager.

While I was at the pond a squadron of Kitchener's horse passed by on their way to join French. A battery of several Maxims and pom-poms started to follow, but, drawing several shells from the laager, they were compelled to retire. They made a dash for cover behind the more north-

ward kopje, to which I followed them. Turning my horse loose among a lot of Boer forage I climbed this kopje, and reached its top just in time to see a large body of Tucker's Mounted Infantry make a charge on the Boer position.

They moved steadily up, the enemy allowing them to come seemingly within about five hundred yards. Then the sharp, irritating "bark, bark" of Boer pom-poms burst on the half-silence. The main body slowed to a halt. A few scattered horsemen rode on in line with the scouts. These, too, halted; then they turned and galloped furiously back toward the main body, which also began to move back-

Artillery in Action. A 15-pounder ready to fire.

ward. A few already in the rear had secured a good start. The whole body soon fell back in a confused mass, thinning at some parts, bunching in others. Here and there an empty saddle told of a rider thrown or wounded. A black horse, striding alone, struck by a shell, suddenly crumpled up from the rear, wrinkling like paper in one's hand, and stopped abruptly, falling in a heap. Another stumbled, and then rolled and kicked; while, all the while, the demoralizing bark of that terrible pom-pom jarred my nerves as badly as it disorganized the unhappy mounted infantry regiment which somebody's blunder had sent galloping against the gallant rear-guard of the retreating Boer army.

But within another ten minutes the Imperial guns arrived and began to creep up slowly, alternately firing and advancing, a hundred yards at a time, until within less than a mile of the laager. As they were in a hollow and out of sight of the enemy the fire was not returned, but the Boers had one big gun busily answering French's naval guns at the right.

Later, about four hundred cavalry made a detour to the south and west on the plain before me, endeavoring to execute a flank movement on the laager; but they were discovered and shelled so heavily that they had to fall back toward French's position. The laager was now being shelled from three positions—Tucker's by the river, French's to the right, and by the battery accompanying the cavalry, which had fallen back toward French; only the two last-mentioned were at all replied to by the Boers. From my own position I could see the flash of the guns, hear the whistling of the shells in the air, hear the reports of the guns, see the shells burst, and finally, after a long wait, hear the bursting reports.

While under the enemy's fire I could first see the reddish-white spit of flame from a Boer gun when it was discharged; then I could hear the shell coming, and if I could have known just where it would strike I would have been supremely happy; but I could only wait and listen for the sound of its explosion, and then quickly turn my head in that direction in time to see its smoke—after the danger was over. It was generally safer to lie down; and I always forgot to note the sound of the gun, which should arrive shortly after. Being an American, a neutral and non-combatant, I always had a feeling of annoyance and irritation, when under fire, as though the enemy should make allowance for that fact. Later, however, even this form of nervousness passed away, and I was not conscious

of anything more than interest and curiosity when under shell-fire. But Mauser fire—that's a different matter.

After the four-cornered artillery duel had somewhat abated, about a dozen scouts in widely-extended order rode up from the hollow near the guns toward the laager. Slowly they cantered onward to the base of the kopje. Neither they nor I could tell how soon a withering fire

Artillery Firing with Smokeless Powder; a fraction of a second after the discharge, as shown by the position of the men. The flash would have been shown if it had been possible to press the button on the instant. The smoke, if present, would have lingered long enough to have been caught by the camera.

would be poured upon them. They were sent out to see if the enemy were still in the trenches; failure to return would imply they were. As I could see them distinctly, my excitement was nearly as intense as theirs must have been. As they neared the kopje they rose on a slight ridge I had not noticed before, and then paused on its top. Another dozen followed them, and then another. They huddled together nervously for a moment, and then a few ven-

tured around the right end and disappeared from view. Very soon they reappeared and began leisurely to scatter about, probably looking for loot; so I knew that the Boers had retreated farther east along and across the river.

Months afterward I met one of these men—Charley Ross, the Canadian scout, who told me that he had climbed the kopje, and with several other men watched for an hour the Boers, across the river, streaming away northeastward, while he almost shed tears of vexation because somebody's blunder had failed to provide for the prompt arrival of artillery to send a rain of shells after them.

"Why," he said, "with one battery of field-guns we could have captured a thousand of the bloody beggars!"

During the later part of these movements General Wood climbed the kopje, and was much interested in what I had to tell him of the preceding events. With the retreat of the Boers from the big kopje and the dam entrenchments the day's fight concluded. It was too late for further pursuit, and I started to return to camp before darkness. Looking at my map, I found I had over fifteen miles to go, and nearly in a straight line. On the way I was joined by an officer and his lieutenant whom I had met at one of the outposts on the Modder River trek; they were off duty, and, like myself, had merely ridden out to see the fight. We three rode back along the line of the deserted trenches, and took time to examine the empty laagers; also to loot or commandeer a few things for which we could find use. A soldier "loots," and if caught he may be imprisoned, or even hanged; the authorities "commandeer," but correspondents and officers merely "annex." Evidently the Boers had left camp in a great hurry. In some isolated places, which the troops had not reached during their advance, we found smouldering fires with overcooked meats, still untouched, in pots and pans and kettles. Near by were

some milk-tins, freshly filled. The Major annexed a fine toilet set in a leather case. The Lieutenant filled two saddle-wallets with table and kitchen utensils, while I took a new mackintosh, a waterproof blanket and a fine camel's-hair blanket, together with a small Bible and a few dum-dum cartridges, which were on a bed in a tent near the trenches.

These trenches had been constructed in an admirable manner, though they were not very deep. They were mostly at the foot of the hills facing the English advance, cleverly concealed, with other trenches on the tops of the kopjes behind. From their positions it was clearly evident that, had the Boers stood fast and waited until the English were within a few hundred yards, a steady fire from Mauser and Maxim would have nearly annihilated the khaki-clad legions and sent them flying in helpless retreat. But the spectacle of the swarming numbers coming across the veldt was too much for the Boers, already half-terrorized by the Paardeburg affair; and when they saw away to the southward, five miles beyond their left flank, General French's turning movement, they did not wait to see how far he would get, but fled without firing a shot until the rear-guard action was forced upon them later by the close proximity of their pursuers. We went through five miles of the laagers, and from the appearance of some of them the Boers had been waiting there a long time, expecting the attack weeks earlier. Everything was in confusion; clothing and food supplies were scattered in all directions; where the Tommies passed through they ate ravenously everything they found, having been on half-rations for a long time. At one place I found a soap-box post-office on a post; I tore the sign off as a curio and took it with me. Among other souvenirs I collected was a small tobacco-pouch, carefully and elaborately embroidered. Bibles were

strewn all about, and every tent or hut constructed of stones and branches had a few letters scattered around. Of course our curiosity caused us to consume considerable time, and the sun fell below the kopje-lined horizon while I was still five miles from camp.

About this time we met the headquarters convoy on its way to the new headquarters at Poplar Grove. As the troops were all far in advance, this consisted only of a long line of carts and wagons drawn by mules, horses, and trek-oxen. Now and then a Cape-cart containing a tired, dirty correspondent inside, passed by, driving ahead of the more slowly-moving transport.

At one place we passed almost a regiment of native servants hunting for their masters. The field telegraph corps were already following the insulated ground telegraph wire dropped by the headquarters staff as they advanced, and were erecting in its place the permanent wire on slender rods about fifteen feet high. The road was becoming very bad, and my pony was tired, having carried me nearly forty-five miles since sunrise. Several times he had stumbled badly, plunging along several yards with his nose in the dirt, and nearly unseating me, so I was immeasurably relieved to see the tall willows of Osfontein rising out of the darkness ahead of me, though I reached the camp to find Landon, Pollock and Young all busily engaged in preparing letters and cables, which, together with my own copy, I was to carry into Kimberley, forty miles away, the next morning.

The casualties among the English that day amounted to about forty. Among them was Lieutenant Keswick, my guest at the De Villiers farm a few days before. Several Boer guns were found buried in trenches after their carriages had been disabled. Steyn and Krüger had gotten safely away with the rest of the army, with more speed than dignity; and, owing to French's neglect to get around

to the rear of the Boer position before daybreak, "Bobs" missed his greatest opportunity to end the war. Three months later I was the guest, one evening, of Colonel Gourko and Lieutenant Thompson, the military attachés captured from the Boer side, after they had been returned by the way of Delagoa Bay to the Boer army. I showed them my map of this Poplar Grove affair, and with the greatest interest we went over it together. We found the Boer positions, as marked, substantially correct. Our other information concerning the Boers was approximately accurate also, with the single exception that instead of twelve thousand men in the trenches, with thirty thousand concentrating behind, the total Boer force at Poplar Grove opposing Lord Roberts' entire army of nearly forty thousand men amounted to less than twenty-five hundred! This is official and beyond dispute. From then on, until the appearance of General De Wet in the Free States, there was no further serious opposition to the advance of the Imperial army.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE OCCUPATION OF BLOEMFONTEIN.

EARLY on the morning after the battle I was in the saddle again, riding hard to the new headquarters at Poplar Grove to have our despatches censored, and then to ride on to Kimberley. I had to double back on my tracks from Poplar Grove to Koodoosrand, cross the drift there, and then follow the road across the veldt to the city of diamond fame. The horse I used this time was Landon's best,—a magnificent English hunter, imported into the country at the beginning of the war. He was a big animal, and I galloped him fifty-five miles that day, with an hour's rest half way. My method was to gallop hard for half an hour, then dismount and walk ten minutes; the short rest always redoubled the horse's energy by the time I got into the saddle again. The whole of the next day I allowed him to rest, giving him a short gallop through Kimberley in the afternoon. This was my first visit to the city, and I was sorry to leave it so soon; but on the third day I started back at sunrise, having a presentiment that I had wasted time for which I would be sorry later on. I did not ride so hard this time, but pushed steadily on, arriving at Poplar Grove only to find it deserted. The army had gone on. This was sorry news, for I had carried no forage for my horse, and he needed some badly.

I met a few transports, from the conductors of which I learned that the army had started on the march the day before. There was no trouble in following it, for an army leaves tracks behind it as it progresses, and the broken-up

surface of the veldt for the width of half a mile, contracting at times into a narrower but deep-grooved track, showed the way more plainly than any map. I pushed on slowly, and by sunset overtook the main transport. The army, of course, was ahead, and eight o'clock brought me to headquarters and "The Times" outfit, after having ridden sixty-four miles.

General French poses for the author. A characteristic attitude during an engagement.

It was hard on the horse, and I never rode him again. In fact, he never recovered from the effects of that ride to Kimberley and back, and no one regretted it more than I. During those three days I had learned to be almost too fond of the animal; one incident will show why. On the first day, when I off-saddled him to rest half way, I noticed that he showed no disposition to stray. Indeed, when I stretched myself on the grass he ate around me in a very small circle, and when I got up to walk a short distance off he followed me like a dog. At Kimberley I left him standing at the curb and went into a drug store to inquire the way to the telegraph office; I saw the clerk look excitedly over my shoulder at the door, and turning, found that my horse had followed me half way in. I backed him out, and then rode on, after receiving directions. When walking to rest him, between gallops, I soon found he would follow without my leading him. During my return ride I stopped to off-saddle at a deserted farmhouse, and I turned him loose without halter or bridle in a small patch of grass, and sat down under a near-by tree to rest.

After cropping the thin grass for five minutes he suddenly stopped, lifted his head, looked around a bit, and then deliberately started off on a trot. Naturally I was somewhat disturbed at the prospect of having to chase him, perhaps many miles, before catching him; but instead of following at once I waited. Several hundred yards away were a number of half-wild veldt horses, which I thought he was going to join, but he trotted calmly past them and went on, stopping at last at a dam which I had not seen. He waded out into the middle, drank full and deep, and then, without even a look at the other horses, turned around, walked out and started, again at a trot, back to where I was sitting, stopping when he came up, and going on eating the poor grass there, although he had passed much better patches on his way back. Three weeks passed, after my sixty-four-mile ride, before I saw him again; then he was stabled in a yard at Bloemfontein. I walked up to the gate and whistled; he trotted over, stuck his nose in my my hand, and then followed me all over the yard, rubbing my shoulder and arm. It had been cruel of me to ride him so hard, but war's necessity forced it.

As it was, I only caught up with the army after the battle of Driefontein had ended. It had been a sharp conflict, and both sides had lost heavily. Young had had a horse shot under him in the afternoon, thus reducing our lot by still another one. Two of our other horses were lost, and we had to yoke two steers to the spring wagon. I had missed the battle, and early the next morning the army was on the march again. I rode a sick horse a few hours, and then commandeered an abandoned artillery horse on the veldt. This was Sunday, and the army advanced from Driefontein only twelve miles farther, to Assfogelskop and Doornboom. Early Monday the trek was resumed to Ventersvalli—sixteen miles. French's cavalry division was

always one day in advance of the staff, and monopolized the fighting, which, of course, I missed seeing. General French made a forced march from Ventersvalli, his horses having no forage for two days except the sparse vegetation of the veldt, and by twenty hours' continuous marching reached the kopjes near Bloemfontein Monday evening, where, on Monday night and early the following morning, he exchanged a few shots with the enemy, without damage to either side. About seven o'clock in the morning a battalion of Roberts' horse entered the city, and on their approach about four hundred Boers left, taking with them as prisoners a body of scouts which had entered earlier. The battalion of Roberts' horse also withdrew. By ten o'clock Lord Roberts and his staff reached French's position, and established temporary headquarters at Mr. John Steyn's country seat, eight miles south of the capital. Here he was entertained at breakfast by the President's brother, who had wisely refrained from flight and thus saved his property from destruction, for Lord Roberts immediately put a guard of forty men about the place. A magnificent view of the wide plain, with Bloemfontein at the farther edge, could be had from a ridge of kopjes three miles from Mr. Steyn's place, and from which Lord Roberts and his staff waited the intelligence of the city's surrender, which arrived about noon. Then, with the Cavalry Brigade, the Field Marshal advanced, met some of the Free State officials two miles out, and accepted their surrender, after which he entered the city and occupied the capital of the Orange Free State.

I rode up on my commandeered steed just as "Bobs" was leaving Mr. Steyn's house; he, with his staff, the military attachés, a few correspondents and a dashing escort of lancers, swept across the veldt to the summit of the ridge and dismounted. Taking a short cut, I followed and reached

the ridge about the same time, though several hundred yards farther east. Before our eyes, bright in the clear sunshine and the transparent atmosphere, lay Bloemfontein, the capital of the Free State. Between the city and us a five-mile stretch of velvety veldt, as flat as a billiard-table, lay under a cloudless sky. The enemy, completely sur-

Mr. John Steyn, Brother of President Steyn, and Daughter, Posing for the Author at Mr. Steyn's Country Residence, eight miles south of Bloemfontein.

prised, was miles away to the northwest, where they had entrenched and were awaiting the advance attack of the hated English. On each flank the British artillery were moving out to encircle the town.

It was evident that by night the place would be forced to surrender. Of the previous exploit of the battalion of Roberts' horse I was ignorant. So far as I knew, Boer

cannon might at any moment open on us from the high kopjes near Bloemfontein. Dreamily looking across the quiet valley at the shining tin roofs in the distance, a wild American thought surged through my brain; then, moving well to the right of the staff so as to avoid detention, I cautiously rode down the steep side of the kopje, found my way to the khaki-colored wagon-road which stretched in a nearly straight line across the veldt, and quietly cantered into Bloemfontein. Capture, or worse, was possible, but I was willing to risk any danger to have the honor of being first in Bloemfontein.

On the way, and about two miles from the city, I met a party of natives on horseback. They all took off their hats to me and shouted "God Save the Queen," after which I graciously allowed them to pass on. I had a notion to commandeer one of their horses, but concluded that that would be unkind. Half a mile out I met two young ladies on bicycles, wheeling toward the head of Lord Roberts' column, which was forming several miles in the rear and to the left. Near the city I passed several carriages containing half a dozen long-bearded burghers, whom I rightly guessed to be town officials. They afterward drove on toward the column, while the ladies returned to the city. The main road, as it enters the city of Bloemfontein, passes over a small kopje, on the summit of which stands a handsome monument in memory of the Burgher-Basuto war; near by is also the town artillery barracks; then the road plunges directly into the city down a low grade, ending in the market square.

As I rode alone toward the monument I was loudly cheered by various groups of ladies and a few men who had gathered to welcome the British. One old lady shouted to me, "We have been waiting a long time for you to come. Thank God, you are here at last!" These were

Uitlanders, or British subjects, who had been allowed to remain by the Boers during the war. I had been somewhat embarrassed by so much attention, and, until this incident, I was undecided as to how to receive it. Then I determined that, temporarily at least, as I was wearing a khaki-colored coat, purchased at Kimberley, I would have to play the part of a true Briton, so I began to salute with my riding-whip in my best military manner. I decided to await the arrival of Lord Roberts at the monument, having from there a clear view of the entire surrounding country.

As the troops began their march toward the city a number of blacks who, throughout the war, had believed that English victory would mean for them release from the Boer yoke, which they understood to mean the granting of the freedom which is license, broke open the doors of the Barracks in their hilarious joy and commenced looting. Men and women, also a great number of pickaninnies, rushed inside, upsetting the furniture and breaking windows. Suddenly one big fellow emerged with a quaint-looking helmet on his head. This set the pace for the rest, and soon helmets, bedding, drums, trumpets and uniforms were being passed around in the crowd, occasioning many quarrels and struggles for possession. While this was occurring, the small crowd of whites stood quietly watching, none daring to interfere. Temporarily there was no law, for the Free Stater troops had departed hours before, and the English had not yet taken possession.

The uproar was at its height when the occupying force, with "Bobs" at its head, reached the base of the kopje. First appeared the escort of Lancers, then several carriages, containing the Mayor, Landrost, State Secretary and other officials of the Free State. Then followed half a company of lancers in close order, stretching across the road, and acting as escort for Field Marshal Lord Roberts,

of Kandahar, who followed ten yards behind, riding alone. Directly after him came the staff, the military attachés and then the whole corps of war correspondents riding in a body. I was about to join them when I saw Lord Roberts observing the looting natives, who were waving military coats, horns and trumpets in the air, and shouting "God Save the Queen!" to the accompaniment of a big base-drum, vigorously kicked by half a dozen at once; then he pulled up his horse, halting the entire column, and called to his staff officers to stop the looting. Several of them dashed forward, and with their riding-whips soon convinced the blacks that there had been a mistake. The officers were reinforced by half a dozen of the lancers, and, under the personal supervision of Lord Roberts, every article was returned to the Barracks; and not until then did the column proceed on its march of entry and occupation.

This incident made a deep impression for good on the crowd of whites, who redoubled their cheering, which the chief acknowledged as he passed on. Simultaneously with the advance down the hill into the city the company of lancers began singing "The Soldiers of The Queen," which was taken up by the entire cavalry brigade behind. It was a thrilling scene, even to a disinterested American war correspondent, and I felt something very much like a hurrah ascending my throat; but I kept quiet, and before the lancers had reached my position I jagged the last remaining gallop out of my tired horse with my spurs and rode on ahead of the column during its march through the city.

Save for a few natives scattered about the streets, and small groups of people, mostly women and children, at the crossings, the city seemed deserted. The houses were all tightly closed, the occupants evidently fearing a general loot by "The Soldiers of The Queen." The small groups

all cheered us indiscriminately as we progressed, I myself coming in for a goodly share. After half a mile of this dismal sort of progress we came to the market square, where a much larger and more enthusiastic crowd was gathered. Here the column turned to the left, passed by the Bloemfontein Club and the United States sub-Consul's office; over this, as I saw the Stars and Stripes, I let out a whoop which made a few of the Free Staters look at me rather curiously. I paid no attention to them, but went on into Maitland Street, for which I saw the column behind was heading. Leaving the square, the atmosphere of desertion and hushed suspense again asserted itself until another half mile brought us to the government buildings. In front stood the statue of Sir John Brand, twenty-five years President of the Free State, and knighted by the Queen. Here was another halt while Lord Roberts quietly read the inscription on the base of the monument. A crowd closed in about him; English residents pressed forward to thank him for coming, and burghers approached to ask protection for their families and property. The keys of the government buildings were delivered up to him by a government official, after which Lord Roberts again led the way, turning to the left for several blocks into Georges Street, where he halted again, before the Presidency Building—a large, white sandstone structure, extremely imposing and very

Mr. John Fraser, of Bloemfontein, Secretary of State of the Orange Free State, who officially surrendered the Capital to Lord Roberts. He was the single pro-British member of the Raadzaal, or Parliament.

handsome, from which President Steyn had departed in haste only the evening before. The gates were closed and some one inside was objecting to opening them, but soon they swung back and "Bobs" rode into the grounds, followed by the staff, attachés and correspondents.

When the Presidency was reached, I halted until the group of correspondents came by, and then, joining them, I rode into the grounds while the men shouted "God Save the Queen!" and everybody congratulated everybody else. As I joined the correspondents one of them shouted to me,

"I hear you are the first in; when did you get here?"

Blushing with pleasure at this public recognition of my feat, I answered—shamelessly adding an extra hour or two to the hour, so as to make assurance doubly sure. A roar of laughter followed, and I learned the speaker himself, with two others, had been in and out again four or five hours before my arrival. There is some satisfaction, after you have taken desperate chances, in receiving the proper reward for so doing; but to have persuaded yourself for several hours that you were running grave risks, and then, when you are about to close your fingers upon the bubble of satisfaction, to discover there had been no risk at all, and to awaken from the fond delusion to find yourself an object of ridicule is mildly exasperating, to say the least. However, I laughed with the others and admitted my error. Then we learned that the attachés and correspondents would have to find quarters at the hotels, while the chief and his staff occupied the Presidency. Before we left the band assembled, played "God Save the Queen," and an officer hauled a small Union Jack up the flagstaff in the corner of the yard, while everybody cheered, and Landon took a photograph. As we rode out of the grounds, my horse jostled me against Captain Slocum, the American military attaché, whom I had met at the Consulate at Cape Town. We ex-

changed congratulations at being present on so impressive an occasion, and arranged to meet again later in the day.

By this time it was after two o'clock, and together with several other correspondents I hunted up a hotel, where, after threatening to confiscate the entire property, we persuaded a reluctant landlord to furnish us with a hot meal, first opening a few bottles of champagne. Our only other alternative was to drink tea; coffee and other alcoholic liquors had been completely exhausted during the five months' isolation. So we each drank our quart of "extra dry" in honor of Lord Roberts' triumphal entry into Bloemfontein, the Capital of the Orange Free State, on that 13th day of March, in the year 1900.

The reluctance of the landlord to serve us was not so much due to his hostility to everything English as to the fact that almost his entire staff of black servants had taken advantage of the presence of the troops to desert him in a body. We did not allow a little thing like that to bother us, and the landlord was pleased to wait upon us himself. Then we went to the Bloemfontein Club, a handsome stone and brick structure on the market square, where the officers of the army had installed themselves as self-invited guests.

A goodly number of Free Staters were there also, not quite sure that the new order of things included them, but nevertheless resolved to make the best of their position and be as friendly as possible with their conquerors. They talked freely with me on the situation, and my nationality seemed to be an immediate bond of sympathy. They all admitted that so far the Free State was concerned "the war was now over." President Steyn had fled the night before. It was said he would have been shot had his fellow-citizens known of his intended desertion. In fact, he rode off toward the British lines at sundown, and had his

cart meet him out on the open veldt south of Bloemfontein; then, driving around the outskirts of the city, he retreated northward and joined the commandoes at Brandfort. The abuse of Steyn which followed this course came mainly from pro-British Free Staters; subsequent events completely vindicate the President's action, for his constant presence among his troops has been as great a factor in continuing the war as the personality of De Wet has been among the Transvaal burghers. There was a general admission that the burghers would continue to make a stubborn resistance; and, as one old Free Stater said to me, "We expect plenty of hard fighting yet." The general opinion among British officers was that about four months would be required to end the war.

CHAPTER XIX.

OBSERVATIONS IN THE FREE STATE.

THE nature of the country taken into consideration, this invasion of the Free State, terminating in the occupation of Bloemfontein, was really a marvellous achievement. With the sole exception of the oxen drawing a portion of the transports, neither man nor beast could "live off of the country." The transport service was compelled to carry food for the men and forage for their horses from the base at Modder River. The roads were generally bad, being either virgin veldt—heavy mud, bringing the carts to a standstill at times—or, after a day's sunshine, fine dust three to six inches deep, which was quite as bad. For two days before taking Bloemfontein General French's Cavalry Brigade had been without forage other than that of the veldt, and before it could go into service again the brigade had to be entirely remounted. The wastage of horses at this time was over five thousand a month. Native horses, broken in and accustomed to the veldt, on which they could live, were only to be had in small numbers, for the Boers had commandeered all they could round up as they retreated. In addition to the difficulties of the transport, after the column left the Modder River at Poplar Grove water became scarce, and obtainable only about once in every ten or fifteen miles, from the farm dams. The days were cloudless, so the hot sub-tropical sun beat directly down on the straggling lines of Tommies, while the bitterly cold nights, with occasional sprinklings of rain, made the coming of darkness a daily horror to the poor

fellows, most of whom carried only a single blanket, and that not very heavy. Only staff officers and correspondents indulged in the luxury of carts and tents, and during the last few days of forced marching the latter were never unpacked. Then the sickness of many of the men, with its depressing effect on their companions, and the failure of the enemy to support the fagging excitement of the troops and relieve the tedium by making a fight, were

An improvised water-cart, made from a whiskey-barrel, used at Bloemfontein during the water-famine after General De Wet had captured the city's water-works, about twenty miles distant.

additional causes of discouragement for the English. The average soldier can better endure two days of fighting and one of marching than three days of marching alone, even though on the fighting days he may be compelled to march farther than on the marching days. The excitement of a fight is a wonderful stimulant, but mere steady marching after a retreating enemy, far in the lead, is the hardest kind of work.

As a marching and as a fighting General, too much

praise cannot be given to Lord Roberts. Of Lord Kitchener the opinion most commonly expressed among the army officers was, "No better man can be found to take any number of men, with their equipment, any given distance within any given time; but as soon as they get there, for God's sake don't let him have anything to do with the fighting." There was much talk at this time of Lord Roberts taking command, with Kitchener as his Chief of Staff; that "Bobs" was to be the figure-head, while Kitchener was to do the work. In the course of time this came to Lord Roberts' ears, and it is natural to infer it did not please him overmuch. At any rate, there was no lack of evidence that "Bobs" was "the whole thing" himself, and that Kitchener was in fact as well as in rank a subordinate. After the battle of Poplar Grove General Kitchener was sent to Kimberley, and during the remainder of the advance on Bloemfontein he was down at De Aar, superintending the reopening of railway communication, from Nauwport and Colesberg Junction, with Bloemfontein.

There is little love lost between Lord Kitchener and the war correspondents; not that the latter are not willing enough to be friendly, for that is their duty, but because Kitchener hates the light of publicity as Satan hates holy water. Had he had his way, we would all have been sent back to Cape Town in February; Lord Roberts, on the other hand, gave us a "free hand," with no restrictions, to roam as we would. During the last few days of this march the war correspondents were in a terrible plight. Our horses were becoming exhausted for want of proper food, their powers being overtaxed, and it was impossible to keep fresh riding-horses in reserve for use during a possible attack at any moment. In addition to our other troubles the army commissariat had refused to furnish us with rations and forage, compelling the carting of all supplies

from Modder River or Kimberley, more than sixty miles westward.

Up to this time my relations with the British officers had been almost entirely of a social nature. I found them without exception to be the most courteous and pleasant set of men I have ever met—always dignified, and with what seemed to me to be an exceptionally high sense of honor, their code of which every man appeared to live up to also. Later on I was able to see something more of the same men in action at close quarters. I do not care to criticise their efficiency as officers, for what demerits they have are more the fault of the system than of the material. But as to courage and bravery, the English officer has few equals and no superiors. Bravery, especially in time of battle, is largely a matter of comparison. The British Tommy, drawn from the slums of London, where for perhaps many generations he and his ancestors had never known the meaning of comfort, taken on a dreary voyage to Table Bay, half-baked in cattle-cars for a thousand miles across the Karroo Desert, then marched in the heat of day, sleeping chilled and wet at night, on half-rations all the time—after such a preparation a real battle or skirmish with the enemy is a tremendous relief from a terrible monotony, and requires only a low grade of courage to urge Tommy onward,—he has so little to lose.

But with the aristocratic officers the case is quite different. They have been in perhaps half a dozen campaigns before; there is nothing novel in the experience. They have left comfortable barracks or luxurious quarters and clubs in London; they belong to the upper ten thousand who have more or less of all that man can desire. They have left behind, and hope to go back to, all that's best in life. They may lose what all the rest of humanity are strenuously striving with might and main to obtain. And

they know it. And whenever they rush out under Mauser fire, twenty yards ahead of their companies, shouting "Come on, men!" they know their chances are not one in ten, for every skirmish results in two or more officers killed or wounded.

I have seen these clean-faced, long-limbed "Lion's cubs" leading charges, going to certain death without flinching, as though they were but cheering a cricket match. While I cannot but find fault with a certain recklessness in their manner, yet I must admit there are no braver men in all the armies of the world than these same aristocratic British officers, who frequently go into action wearing kid gloves, white collars and a monocle.

CHAPTER XX.

THROUGH THE ENEMY'S LINES WITH A MESSAGE FOR THE QUEEN.

AROUND the corner from the club I found stabling, with a butcher, for my horse—the artillery animal I had commandeered several days before on the veldt. In the next stall stood a little mare which, on inquiry, I found was for sale, the price being fifteen pounds. I went back to the club, where about five o'clock I met Landon, my professional superior officer, who was looking for me.

"How would you like to ride to Kimberley to-night with a despatch for The Times?'" he asked; adding, "It may be dangerous, and I won't ask you to undertake it unless you want to."

I intuitively knew that here was an opportunity for adventure, perhaps distinction, and promptly answered,

"That's just what I do want to do; how soon am I to start?"

"As soon as you can. How are you fixed with a horse?"

I told him of the mare, and he handed me twenty-five pounds.

"Be ready in half an hour; meet me at the club, and don't let anyone know you are going. I have some exclusive news which will be public property to-morrow, and I want you to get a good start on the others."

The half-hour was just sufficient time for me to try the mare, discover that she was what I wanted, and that the butcher could not be beaten down a shilling in the price.

Then I went to meet Landon. He took me around the corner, saying that he did not want Gwynne, of Reuter's Agency, to see me with a new horse and suspect something. Then he handed me the despatches and asked me to take them up to the Presidency for Lord Stanley to censor, and then get away as quickly as possible. Eight miles out somewhere I was to meet "The Times" outfit and annex an extra horse.

Lord Stanley kept me waiting about ten minutes, but when he came out he pleasantly asked why I wanted to have a message censored since there was no way of sending it. I told him of my intention of riding to Kimberley that night.

"But you'll be shot or captured," he said. "The outposts guarding the line of communications were all withdrawn after Driefontein, the Boers have gotten in behind us and have cut the telegraph wire, and at this moment even Lord Roberts is entirely cut off from communication with the outside world. You certainly will be unable to get through; and as your friend, let me advise you not to think of it."

I answered that "The Times" despatch had to go, and that there was no one but I to carry it; also, that I was in a hurry to get off at once, as soon as he would censor my papers. He rapidly read them over and stamped them with his seal, holding the papers up against the wall of the Presidency; then, as he was about to hand them to me, he hesitated and said, "I don't know about this; I shall have to consult the Chief." In a quarter of an hour he was back again. "All right," he said, "you may go. Here is your despatch, and Lord Roberts wants you to take this with you and give it to the telegraph authorities before any press or private despatches." As he said this he gave me a square, white envelope, sealed and addressed to

the telegraph authorities at Kimberley or Boshof. Along the top was written, "Clear the line; must be sent before all press despatches." On the lower left-hand corner the single word "Urgent" was written, heavily underlined, and on the lower right-hand corner was the single word, "Roberts."

"In case of my capture shall I destroy this, to prevent the Boers from reading it?"

"No! no!" answered Lord Stanley quickly; "you may let them read it, for it's only the Field Marshal's message announcing the surrender of Bloemfontein, and no doubt the Boers will be glad to hear of it." Then, smiling at his little joke, he gave me his hand and said, "Take care of yourself. I hope you'll get through all right; if you do, let me know as soon as you get back." Then he gave me a private message of his own, asking me to run it in after the Field Marshal's, and told me, "The last news we had before the wire was cut was that Boshof had been captured by our troops. Use your own judgment how to ride, but you'll find Boshof a good deal nearer."

I rode back to the club, consulted Landon, and we decided that it would be unwise to try Boshof, for it was certain that some Boer commandoes were between it and us. So as evening fell I cantered across the square, up the long grade of Monument Avenue, passing Hutton, who was just coming in with the Lancers at the Basuto Monument, and then out into the veldt, striking southward in the path of the army.

My main object, thus far, was to get out of the city without attracting the attention of any of the other correspondents. I succeeded in this at the expense of neglecting to procure provisions for myself or food for the mare, or even waiting for her to be fed. We both started on empty stomachs. About four miles out I met a huge trek-cart

loaded with forage. I rode up to the officer in charge and asked him for a bundle. Of course he refused. I then told him I was on "special service," and demanded two bundles. Again he refused. Then I showed him Lord Roberts' envelope, pointing to the words "Urgent" and "Clear the line."

"This is my authority," I said. "Now, in the name of

The Author in the Market Square at Bloemfontein, on his return from Kimberley after carrying the Field Marshal's despatch announcing the surrender of Bloemfontein. The pony "Cronje" was captured on the veldt on the return ride, and, together with saddle and bridle, was presented to Mr. Rudyard Kipling, to use while the author returned to Cape Town for several weeks. As "Cronje" was only a three-year-old, Mr. Kipling preferred the less glorious but more comfortable Cape-cart of Mr. Bennet Burleigh. Taken by Mr. Scott of "The Illustrated London News."

Lord Roberts and the Queen I'll take two bundles, and you can interfere or not, as you see fit." With this I coolly helped myself. I put the two bundles in front of me on the saddle and rode on, the astonished officer evidently being completely nonplussed as to what to do. Riding another mile, I halted and fed one of the bundles to my little mare, while I fastened the other securely to the saddle.

It was now getting late, and by the time I was in the saddle the darkness was intense. By and by I saw a light ahead, which I knew to be that of Mr. John Steyn's house. Almost at the same time a sharp "Halt! who goes there?" rang out from the darkness. I answered, "Friend." "Advance, friend, and give the countersign." I advanced and told the sentry I didn't know what the countersign was, but that I was from Bloemfontein, on special service for Lord Roberts, and wanted to get to Mr. Steyn's house. He allowed me to pass, but twice more I was halted in the same manner. The last sentry turned me over to his officer, who was sitting by a fire close by. "Who is in command here?" I asked him, before he could speak. "General Colville," he answered. "Have me taken to him at once, please," I said, adding, "I am on special service for Lord Roberts."

A dark figure led the way, and in a few moments I found myself before General Colville's tent. By the light of a lantern he recognized me as soon as I spoke. I told him of my mission, and asked entertainment for myself and horse, for a rainstorm was coming on. My mare was turned over to a Tommy, and General Colville led the way into Mr. Steyn's house, where I was presented to that gentleman and his wife; then in the back room I had a course dinner with the General and his staff, to whom I told the story of the occupation, and in this way discharged in some measure the obligation incurred when General Colville told me the story of the battle of Paardeburg nearly a month before.

It was still raining when dinner was finished, and the General and his officers returned to their tents, leaving me to enjoy the hospitality of Mr. Steyn and his wife. In the hope of continuing my ride I sat up until nearly midnight, talking over things with these two relatives of the deposed President, who were virtually prisoners on their

own estate. Mr. Steyn had publicly opposed his brother's policy of war with England, and it was due to this that he received nominal protection for his property. Nevertheless, despite the many guards about the place the grounds were entirely stripped of trees and shrubbery, the valued acquisitions of ten years of care. I tried to console Mrs. Steyn by telling her that in eighty miles to the westward there was only one house that had not been entirely looted by the soldiers, that one, the home of a German physician, being protected by the German flag. Mrs. Steyn was decidedly pro-Boer.

About midnight I sent for my horse, and started on again in the light, drizzling rain. Eight miles from the Steyn place I was overtaken by a terrific downpour of rain and compelled to take refuge under an abandoned transport wagon until daybreak. Kimberley was now about ninety miles distant, and in an hour I found my little mare was not equal to the task. About this time I rode into a small herd of veldt ponies, and succeeded in getting close enough to a little Basuto bay to lasso him. After carefully transferring the saddle and tying my mare to it, I waited until my new acquisition was looking aside; then I vaulted into the saddle, and both of the brutes immediately ran away with me. We covered at least a mile of veldt before my feet found the stirrups, and four miles more before I got both animals under control. I doubt if my new pony had ever been ridden before. Luckily, instead of bucking he merely ran away; and, since I managed to keep both brutes in the general direction of Kimberley, I made better time as a result. During the remainder of the trip I changed the saddle every five or ten miles, walking a quarter of an hour or more, at times, to rest both horses.

Shortly after noon I reached the battleground of Driefontein, where I found the Sixth Brigade field-hospital en-

camped, having been left behind, unguarded, by Kitchener's orders. A group of officers were waiting for me, having seen me coming for several miles. The first thing I heard was that another rider had passed by shortly before. From his description I knew it must be Reuter's rider on his way to Kimberley. I stopped long enough to take some refreshment while my horses were watered, and then galloped on with my wallets filled with letters, nearly one hundred

Lord Roberts interrupting his morning ride to speak to a little Boer girl on the street at Bloemfontein.

having been collected when I volunteered to carry some to Kimberley. Still more, my pockets were filled with biscuits, and I felt sure I could catch up with Reuter's man, as he only had one horse to my two.

The wounded and convalescent officers, including Mr. Scarth of the "Manchester Courier," crowded about me while I gave them the full details of the march to and capture of Bloemfontein. It was quite evident that the physical disabilities of my hearers were entirely secondary to

their disappointment at being absent from the front at the supreme moment.

Major Pike, who was in command at the hospital camp, gave me little encouragement that I would "catch up" with my rival rider; but on I went, for if I killed both horses in doing it, Lord Roberts' official message was to get to Kimberley first. A few miles farther along was a farmhouse, where I learned that the other man had left there a few moments before on a fresh horse—the last one they had.

My chances looked bad, but on I pushed till four o'clock, when I came to the German doctor's place, where I rested an hour and had dinner; then off again, keeping both horses at a steady gallop. A few miles farther a friendly Kaffir warned me that a Boer commando was just ahead, near the river. I turned slightly out of its path, hoping to get past unobserved, but from a small kopje came the "zing" of a bullet, followed by several more, and the pop-pop of rifles. Two horsemen started to ride toward me; I turned abruptly to the left and rode hard toward the south, fondly hoping that my rival had been captured. Fortunately the pursuit was abandoned; I suppose the Boer scouts were riding very tired horses. I afterward learned that the rival rider had not been captured, but had been fired upon after he had passed the commando. I got safely away, and added a dozen or more miles to my journey's length. At sundown I reached Modder River, having still forty miles between me and Kimberley. By this time I had given up hope of getting in first, until it came to me as an inspiration that the other man could not possibly reach Kimberley until ten o'clock that night, two hours after the telegraph had closed against the reception of press despatches. This gave me twelve additional hours, provided I could get in by eight o'clock the next morning and manage to file my despatches ahead of the other man.

My horses were by this time becoming exhausted; the most I could do was to keep them walking. Once, while leading them, I fell into a half doze, and roused myself to find I was leading only one horse; walking back half a mile, I found the other quietly eating by the roadside. Passing an abandoned farmhouse, I found it occupied by twenty or more Kaffirs, who had a number of horses and carts loaded with loot; but as none of the horses was worth taking, I did not attempt to assert my authority and take advantage of the awe in which they held my khaki uniform. They asked me if they might be allowed to have the house, now that the Boer owners had fled. Knowing that they would do as they pleased after I had left, and until some more potent authority turned them out, I graciously granted them the desired favor; they thanked "The Mahster" effusively, and I rode on feeling quite magnanimous.

I kept going all that night, and, with the exception of my short rest at Steyn's house and under the cart on the veldt, had been in the saddle for two days and two nights. At dawn I found myself nearing Kimberley. Here I passed a huge trek-cart drawn by twenty mules, loaded with merchandise for Bloemfontein; the owner, realizing the need of supplies to take the place of those exhausted by the long isolation of the city, and that the railway would be some time in reopening, saw an opportunity to make a good speculation by getting in first. His cart was hopelessly stuck in the mud; but I know, from the situation, that if he succeeded in getting in within the week he was well paid for his trouble.

In the last few miles of my ride I suffered absolute agony. My back and neck ached terribly, my shoulders were sore from the strain of holding the lines, I was half dazed, and was almost dead of hunger and thirst. It is

natural to suppose that my horses were suffering also; but on I pressed, reached the telegraph office by 7 A.M., found a clerk who had arrived early, presented my despatch from the Field Marshal, and learned to my satisfaction that no others from Bloemfontein had preceded it. I filed Lord Stanley's private message immediately afterward, and then waited until "The Times" despatch also was on the wire. Then, feeling that I had earned a rest, I went to the hotel, taking with me four pineapples, bought from a peddler on the street, ate the four, went to bed, and remained there twenty-four consecutive hours.

CHAPTER XXI.

A FULL LICENSE AT LAST.

THIS ended a week of the hardest kind of riding, beginning with forty miles on the day of Poplar Grove, fifty-five the next day, resting at Kimberely, then sixty-four miles back to Dreifontein, then for three days averaging twenty-five miles daily, closing the third day by starting on my one hundred and twenty-five-mile ride through the enemy's lines with the Field Marshal's despatch to Kimberley, riding one hundred and sixty-five miles in the last forty-eight hours, and one hundred miles straight in the final twenty-four.

I broke my long slumber in the middle to take dinner, and I spent the following two days resting myself and horses and getting better acquainted with Kimberley, incidentally meeting and dining again with Lieutenant Waite, the "ranker" officer I had entertained at the De Villiers farm ten days before. Toward the evening of the second day I started back for Bloemfontein, stopping at night with the officers of a convoy about ten miles out, camping in a looted farmhouse; the next night I reached the German farm and met young Beresford, who had graduated from Roberts' horse to Bennet Burleigh's "Daily Telegraph" outfit. He was bringing supplies up to Bloemfontein. I passed him the next day, and at night he again caught up with me, and we slept at an Irish burgher's shop or country store, in which a terrific downpour of rain had driven me to take refuge.

Shortly before, I had stopped at a Boer farmhouse to

ask the way. A sweet-faced girl of about fifteen stood in the doorway, the lower half of which was closed while the upper part swung open, the dark interior forming a background against which her white dress and light hair came out finely. I asked,—

"Are there any Boers around here?"

"I'm a Boer," she answered quietly.

"I mean are there any fighting Boers ahead on the road, who might interfere with me if I go on?"

"Oh, no," she answered quaintly in her "book" English. "They are all under the English."

An old man came out and invited me to off-saddle and spend the night; but having learned of the Irishman's shop, I hurried five miles to reach there before the storm, which burst before I had gone a mile, drenching me thoroughly, so that the ancient Hibernian thought it necessary to dose me with hot water and put me to bed at four o'clock in the afternoon, tenderly caring for me, and as tenderly running up a bill, by the next morning, of twenty shillings, which made me feel justified in "annexing" a fine crash towel from his guest-chamber on leaving.

One of my ponies had cut his foot soon after leaving Kimberley. At the German farm I had exchanged it for a new horse, giving the owner—a returned despatch-rider from the Free State army—several pounds as a bonus. He and another brother had returned to the farm in obedience to Lord Roberts' proclamation promising immunity to those who laid down their arms and went home. They plied me closely with questions as to the probable British policy toward the conquered Free Staters, and openly lamented that the Free State had gone into the war at all, saying,

"Why, if we had left the Transvaal to fight it out alone, the English would have bought all our horses and cattle and forage, paying us big prices for them; now they have

commandeered everything and we have got nothing for it, and may even lose our farms, too."

Beresford and I left the Irishman's shop together, each taking two horses and leaving the cart to follow, Bloemfontein being only twenty-four miles distant. Half-way to the city we stopped at a farmhouse and asked for some milk. A woman, who with two children were the only people there, gave us a big pitcherful of cold milk and refused to take payment; yet as we left she said, apologetically,

"The retreating Boers took everything I had but my cow; I haven't even a chicken left. We have nothing to eat in the house, and, our horses having been taken away, I can't drive into Bloemfontein to get provisions. Can you give me anything? I wouldn't ask it for myself, but the children have had nothing but milk since yesterday."

We searched our pockets and wallets, but found only a few "hardtack" biscuits, which she gratefully accepted. Beresford gave her a slip of paper with an order on the driver of his cart, which was soon to pass by, for more provisions, and we hurried on, satisfied that for a few days at least she and her children would be provided for. I gave her a note to present to the commanding officer of the first convoy which should pass that way, and I have no doubt that it procured her further supplies from the Imperial transport from Kimberley, the officers of which had been my hosts the first night after leaving that city.

It was afternoon when we reached Bloemfontein, and I rode directly to the Censor's office and made my report to Lord Stanley. He was much pleased with my success, though he was unable to say whether the reopening of telegraphic communication along the line of the railway southward had enabled others to beat me in getting my message off or not. I took advantage of his good humor to tell

him that I was leaving "The Times'" service and desired a full license for myself. He looked rather blank as I said this, so I continued,

"I am only doing descriptive writing, which you do not have to read; I am not sending any cable messages, so you will not find that granting me this license involves extra work for you."

He looked at me a moment longer, then, as his face relaxed into a smile, he said,

"All right. I'll give you a full license, including telegraphic privileges. What are the names of your papers?"

Then tearing out an official blank he wrote out the license I had so long coveted, and put down the names of the "Daily Mail," of Graham's Town, and the Philadelphia "Press," thus attaching me, independently of "The Times," to Lord Roberts' staff as a regularly accredited war correspondent, with full privileges—practically a commission in the Queen's army, with rank equivalent to that of a lieutenant. I thanked him and departed promptly, resolving that in the future I would obtrude my presence upon him as little as possible, to avoid giving him any cause to regret his generosity.

Leaving the office, I almost ran into the arms of Landon. This reminded me of our conversation on the banks of the Modder River at Paardeburg, when he assured me of the utter futility of attempting to get a pass or license, and how he told me the story of Kipling, the American journalist, the sea-serpent, and Westminister Abbey. I triumphantly waved my new license before his eyes, and reminded him of our conversation on the subject. He examined the license carefully, looked at me blankly and muttered, half to himself, "How very extraordinary! I can't for the life of me understand how you got it!" I left him without explaining how "the trick" had been done; but as I rode off to the

Form of Licence for Newspaper Correspondents.

No. of Licence. 36

Mr. F. W. Unger

having signed the Declaration attached to the Rules for Newspaper Correspondents accompanying Troops in the Field, is hereby licensed to act as Correspondent for the Philadelphia Press and Groscott's Mail Grahamstown

with the Force in under Lord Roberts

dated at Bloemfontein

this 20 day of March,

~~189~~ 1900

He is authorised to draw Rations for himself and one servant, and forage for one horse on payment.

BY ORDER.

Stanley

War License issued to the Author at Bloemfontein by Chief Press Censor Lord Stanley.

hotel my mind wandered back to the Modder River treks and my commandeered or otherwise acquired chickens, and I reflected on the fact that, practically, by hanging on to the tail of a hen I had scratched my way into Lord Stanley's favor, and thus found a way to do him and his commander a service which made his granting me the desired license a matter of manifest propriety.

That night I dreamed I saw the towers of Westminister making a profound bow to a very respectable and dignified old hen standing alone out on the veldt; and this was succeeded by a vision of Lord Stanley entertaining the Field Marshal and his staff at a sumptuous banquet under the trees at Paardeburg. After all, I realized that the (supposedly) most impregnable of "English Institutions"—the Censorship—when properly handled, was only as high as a chicken stands when dropping a fresh egg.

CHAPTER XXII.

TWO BLOEMFONTEINS.

AS already explained in detail, it had happened to fall to my lot to make two entries into the city of Bloemfontein—the first on the 13th, shortly in advance of Lord Roberts and his triumphal procession, and again, one week later, on my return from Kimberley, by which time the city had settled down to a normal state under the new conditions. The deeper impressions of my first entry were of the halting of the troops at the artillery barracks while Lord Roberts personally superintended the stopping of the native looting; also, while I rode in advance of the column through the city, passing the small crowds at the street crossings, and hearing their cheers for the army, I could not avoid noticing that there were few men in the streets, and that nearly all the shops and houses were closed, telling plainly how fearful the inhabitants had been of pillage or loot. Occasionally, from the rear of a garden, a more timid face was seen peering out at the passing troops. All this had given the city an atmosphere of fear and suspense, which was not less noticeable because of the more enthusiastic reception by the English sympathizing portion of the community. This was my impression of Bloemfontein on the day the British entered.

A week later, the invading army was in full possession of the city into which I was riding. It might have been Cape Town or Kimberley, for all the difference discernible between the khaki-dressed men in the streets and the permanent residents. The city seemed to have a smiling,

wide-open expression, contrasting strongly with the frowning, closed-up appearance of a week before. The houses seemed to have people inside of them, and certainly many were visible outside. Children played in the streets, and gaily-dressed ladies were going in and out of the shops which only a few days before had been so tightly closed and bolted. The tide of war seemed to have drifted away from me, and the city had an exceedingly cheerful and

Left Portico of the Raadzaal Hospital, showing the convalescents taking their sun-baths. This building was formerly the Parliamentary meeting-place of the Orange Free State Government, and was a building of which the Free Staters were very proud.

homelike appearance. How this change had been effected I did not know; leaving on the evening of its occupation, and being absent an entire week without hearing any news whatever, I was unable to foresee what the relationship between the army and Bloemfontein would be. But the contrast between the two periods was as striking as a sharp comparison between fearsome anxiety and peaceful security could be, and in a sort of semi-conscious way I

found myself connecting the incident at the artillery barracks with the present conditions, and noting how accurately it had been a forerunner of what was to befall the city and its inhabitants.

So much for the army and Bloemfontein. As for the capital itself, it is not at all unlike scores of cities of the same size scattered through the States of the Union in America, except for the absence of electric cars, without which no self-respecting American city, however diminutive, can exist.

The great numbers of blacks in the streets and the one-story architecture of the place lends a Southern States appearance to Bloemfontein, similar to that of many of the older cities of the Gulf States.

That Bloemfontein was a metropolis was clearly apparent. A centre of supplies, administration and social intercourse always has unmistakable external evidences to indicate its character, whether the locality be Oriental or Occidental, whether the surrounding territory be large or small. The Government buildings at Bloemfontein, the Presidency, the club, the post-office, the stores, hotels and other buildings bordering the market square, all partook of this metropolitan flavor, and served as an entire refutation of the anti-Boer insinuation, circulated in America from British sources, that the Boers were a rude, uncultured and semi-barbarous people.

As for the men of Bloemfontein, the few I met at the hotels and the club, and the many I saw on the street, had the stamp of the city man on their faces and in the cut of their clothes. The usual garb was a grey or brown suit, with a soft felt hat; but enough top-hats and Prince Albert coats were visible to show that the professional and wealthier classes took their styles from Piccadilly, as did the Londoners and New Yorkers.

Through all this, and under the surface, I seemed to see how the future of this fair little city was lying in the hollow of Lord Roberts' palm, with his fingers grasping it tightly, indicative of the firm grasp England intended to take on the entire country. I saw that the more distant future of the city depended on the extension of the railways, and how it was not at all impossible that at some future time, by a single stroke of a pen, some obscure hamlet of the Free State might be declared a more convenient site

British Tommies digging a grave in the Bloemfontein Cemetery for a comrade, who died of enteric fever which was prevalent in the camps about the city.

for the offices now located at Bloemfontein, and rapidly grow into a greater and grander city, leaving the old capital to decay slowly—decay, as have some parts of our history-lacking America; for on our western prairies there are whole cities of tenantless buildings, doomed to solitude and ruin because some railway king decreed that "The line will run thirty miles east,"—or "west."

I began to feel an affection for the little city and its people, and wanted to talk to them, offer sympathy on their loss of independence, and some gentle advice from a

disinterested outsider. I wanted to tell them how the future of their city would depend on the actions of her citizens or burghers; that the sword had done its work in carving a path for the Imperial army into its heart, and that now it would remain for the pen to hold in reserve a more powerful destruction of the city's pride—the pen, more potent than the sword to destroy, for it can command a decay from which there is no recovery.

After all my other memories of Bloemfontein have passed away, I think I shall continue to hear, when its name is mentioned, the almost chant-like singing of "The Soldiers of The Queen" by the Lancers, as they headed the column marching up Monument Avenue, and, afterward, the great outburst of "God Save the Queen!" when the Union Jack was raised at the Presidency. I think, if this national anthem could be more often heard, the enemies of Great Britain would be drawn more closely to that grand old country.

Something like the above appeared in "The Friend," the local newspaper, which, by request of Lord Roberts, was being edited by a committee of the war correspondents. Landon was chairman of the committee, and asked me to write something for "The Friend" "from an American's point of view." While at the club I wrote off my "impressions," consigned my newest acquisition in horseflesh —the pretty little black pony, barely four years old, traded for at the German farm—to Landon's care until the next week, read in "The Friend" that Kipling was coming to Bloemfontein, and wrote a short note, offering him the use of my horse while I was away, consigning the note also to Landon. Then I went to Cape Town to see Emery, draw my first month's salary, get my back letters from America, and procure a new camera to take the place of the one I had been forced to sell five weeks before.

The trip took two days; but, unfortunately, I passed the interesting places along the line at night, thus failing to see them. Cape Town, however, was full of interest. I was now able to look over the place with the eye of prosperity, to talk to my old friend Colonel Stowe from a new level, and to receive his hearty congratulations on my success with pride and gratification well worth the effort required to earn it.

Mr. Amery wrote out a big check for me, which I cashed in half an hour, and then felt indeed like a South African magnate. New clothes had to be procured, and tailors worked by night, at extra rates, to get me fitted out. Dinners were eaten, at which I paid for other plates than my own; in short, a sense of ease, comfort and luxury, and of the wherewithal to pay liberally for all these, was very delightful to me, and for a few days I revelled—that is, in a mild sort of way; no dissipations included. Soon some imp of darkness persuaded me that I needed a typewriter; so one was purchased.

Then I negotiated a new deal, fearful and wonderful in its nature. A certain photographer sent out by an American firm at great expense had failed to get to the front. For a month he had vegetated at Cape Town, waiting for me to come back, a certain mutual friend having whispered that I might be induced to take him with me in the nominal capacity of servant, for my pass provided for an attendant. Several letters on the subject had been mailed to me, one of which found me at Osfontein. On leaving Bloemfontein I had taken the precaution to secure the proper passes to bring this possible servant up to the front on my return. We negotiated and negotiated, and finally reached the contract stage, with witnesses and seals and all that sort of thing. Condensed, the import of a certain slip of paper was that a certain American photographer representing an

American firm at great expense was to accompany me as my servant. My "servant" was to pay me the sum of two hundred dollars per month and all my expenses for the privilege of being my servant. On the other hand, I was to put my servant in such places as would secure for his American firm the best returns in photographic plates exposed at scenes at the front. This contract could be dissolved at any moment by mutual consent, and by the payment of the servant to me, his master, of the sum of two

Funeral Procession of a Gordon Highlander entering the Bloemfontein Cemetery. The body is being borne on the shoulders of four of the Highlanders, and is wrapped in a Union Jack. The view beyond is a five-mile stretch of veldt south of the city, across which Lord Roberts made his final march and entry into the city.

hundred dollars and expenses to date. The servant was incidentally to provide for our transportation while we were on the march, and to purchase horses and carts and hire extra servants, etc., all at his own expense. A peculiar arrangement. To maintain good faith with Lord Stanley the American photographer was also to manipulate a camera for my benefit, becoming my photographer.

Lord Stanley made no objection to this plan, and on my request was about to give me a separate license for "my

photographer," when said servant-photographer entered into a new deal with another correspondent with photographic privileges, cancelled the contract, and paid me in full, with expenses. Our peculiar negotiations consumed some time, bringing us both back to Bloemfontein, where we parted company, I being richer by two hundred and fifty dollars, acquired easily enough in less than a week with the expenditure of little more than some surplus grey matter and the

Dr. Conan Doyle, as the author found him at his tent in the Polo Grounds, where he was in charge of the Langman Field Hospital. A characteristic pose of the creator of "Sherlock Holmes."

risk of incurring the displeasure of certain stern authorities. Still, no mishap occurred, and the conclusion of the deal placed me in the enviable position of a "Free Lance" war correspondent, well mounted, uniformed, provisioned, and supplied with about three hundred dollars in American money—sufficient to keep me going, with economy, for several months, and yet leave enough to get me back to the States *via* the cattle-steamer route. But I did not intend to stop with this amount. My American letters had

brought me one return in the shape of credentials from a small paper and a draft on London for ten pounds. Then "The Times" was to continue my services at the old rates, and my Colonial Syndicate might be worked into renewed life, with its thirty pounds per month. This last failed; the papers had made other arrangements, and the syndicate had fallen apart. Lord Stanley vetoed my first attempt to do work for "The Times" on the score that, as I was now an independent correspondent, it would be manifestly unfair to other papers for "The Times" to employ an extra correspondent. He offered to allow me to carry despatches for "The Times" if I cared to surrender my license; but this was not to my way of thinking, so I was left alone, even my salary-paying servant having deserted me. Indeed, I had little else but money at this time. Mr. Kipling had passed me on his way back to Cape Town. He had not used my four-year-old, having preferred to drive about with Bennet Burleigh in an ingloriously comfortable Cape-cart.

So with my typewriter and my experiences I settled down in a modest boarding-house, on the main street, to study the atmosphere of the Free State and its capital, and write reams of copy for my American papers, "to be paid for if used."

CHAPTER XXIII.

KIPLING AGAIN, AND SOME BLOEMFONTEIN ITEMS.

AFTER a few days I decided to go back to Cape Town again. Lord Stanley asked me to take care of a package of relics and souvenirs which he wanted me to forward to England for him, and this, with a few other commissions for friends, was sufficient excuse for me to make the trip. I intended to make a stay of only two days. On my first night in the city the manager of a local theatre called on me at my hotel and said that, having seen my arrival noted in the evening paper, he had called to ask whether I would consider a proposition to lecture on the war. We talked over details, and I agreed to prepare a lecture, while he made the arrangements for its delivery in Cape Town and elsewhere. The next afternoon I was walking up Adderly Street, when I came face to face with a little man in a black suit. He had very heavy black eyebrows, and wore spectacles. Yes, it was Kipling, who, according to the papers, had sailed for England the day before. Mr. Kipling knew me at once, and after a friendly greeting inquired after my pony, and thanked me for the offer of its services. Then he invited me to walk along up to the Mount Nelson Hotel with him, while I made an effort to express my appreciation of what he had done for me with "The Times." He seemed pleased that his recommendation had proved so efficacious, and listened attentively to my tale up to the climax of my carrying Lord Roberts' despatch to Kimberley. Arriving at the hotel, we sat down together for an hour or two, while I absorbed

great quantities of wisdom from his store of experiences and observation, for he gave me freely of the same; and although I knew I was to him only another human "specimen," I felt none the less flattered by the attention. One of the first things he asked me was,

"Well, did you find plenty of good material to write up?"

Enthusing at once, I replied,

"My goodness, yes; why, you can't understand how much—"

"What's that?" interrupted Mr. Kipling.

Realizing that I was making a mistake, I spluttered,

"Oh, I beg your pardon. I mean—"

"Well, you'd better," he again interrupted; "this is just the time you are up against the fellow who *can* understand," and he chucked with amusement at my confusion.

I recovered and "went back at him" again, and got him talking about the attitude of the American press, which at that time was quite sarcastic at England's expense. "They are acting perfectly beastly," he said. "I hope in your letters you are taking the right side of things, and telling the readers of your papers the truth about this war."

I said I was trying to, but I admitted my inability to successfully impress so capricious an audience as the American people, and asked for a few suggestions.

"Why," he said, "get them to understand what these Boers really are. Tell them that if they can imagine Tammany Hall backed up by cannon and Mausers they'll know what the South African Republics are like."

Then he told me a story of an experience he had at Bloemfontein which well illustrates how conscious he is, and what a keen, boyish delight he takes in being himself. While driving with Bennet Burleigh within a few miles of the firing-line at the Glen, his unmilitary appearance—he

wore a grey suit and a straw hat—attracted the attention of a sentinel, who promptly challenged him. Mr. Kipling gave his name, but the doubting Thomas still hesitated about letting him pass, when Kipling broke out impatiently with, "Why, you ungrateful beggar, is this the way you

A War Artist and Correspondent waiting to photograph "Bobs" at the Presidency at Bloemfontein when the Field Marshal takes his morning ride. The artist-correspondent is Mr. Dinwiddie of "Harper's Weekly," on his way home from the Philippines, and not Mr. Kipling, for whom he is frequently taken.

treat me after all I've done for you?" In the words of Mr. Kipling, as he told this story, "Then the stupid Tommy saw that it really was I and saluted and let me pass." Mr. Kipling had previously explained that, as he should have been challenged some eight miles back, it was hardly worth

while doing so now; but it was not until he gave expression to his feelings in this characteristic manner that the desired effect on the interfering Mr. Atkins was produced.

Another time, while Kipling was wandering about camp in search of a certain Tommy to whom he was carrying a pair of rubber boots entrusted to him by the said Tommy's tentmate, he was stopped by an officious private, who wanted to march him off to the guard-tent. Mr. Kipling gave his name, which, either because of the private's ignorance or obstinacy, failed to produce the usual magical effect.

At this critical moment a non-commissioned officer who had known Mr. Kipling at Aldershot approached, and courteously asked,

"Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Kipling; "I want this man taken off and shot. Do you understand? I want him shot, and I want it done right away." The objectionable man was removed; but as Mr. Kipling said regretfully, when speaking of the incident, "I really am afraid they didn't shoot him, after all."

I told Mr. Kipling of my proposed lecture tour, which he said was "a good thing." I showed him some of the photographs I had taken, which he said were "no good." They were the pride of my heart, but I thanked him for his candor, and then listened humbly to further words of wisdom. He seemed to think me worthy soil, so he endeavored to plant the seeds of Anglo-Americanism in my brain. He pointed out to me the common identity of interest and destiny of the two nations, and by successfully impressing on me the fact that Anglo-Americanism was not only "the coming thing," but "the greatest coming thing of the twentieth century," he all but enlisted my humble services in its interest.

Then he appealed to my selfishness, and showed me how

it would help me in my career if I would take up the matter, make it my hobby, and give the world some evidence that I had done so. That clinched the matter, and I gave him my hand and promised that from that moment I would be a decided Anglo-American maniac; but I reserved the privilege of retaining any pro-Boer sympathies which future events or Americanism asserting itself in the subject might cause to grow. Mr. Kipling admitted that the Boer question was, after all, only a minor affair in comparison with the great questions of vital interest to both America and England which the coming century might develop. After exchanging my wish that he might have a pleasant voyage home for his hope that my success would continue as it had started, I left Mr. Kipling, thoroughly convinced by him of the truly great common destiny of the English-speaking races, their Christian civilization to be aided in the more distant future by two powerful allies—Germany and that Asiatic England, plucky little Japan.

The Mayor of Cape Town and other dignitaries entering the Good Hope Gardens to present Sir George White with a Complimentary Address on his relief at Ladysmith. Taken by E. V. H. Melville.

While at Cape Town I witnessed the presentation by the officers of the corporation of Cape Town of an address to Sir George White, the hero of Ladysmith.

The presentation took place in the Good Hope Hall, delightfully situated in the Municipal Gardens, picturesque and fragrant, noticeably so after a month on the barren

veldt. The hall was gayly decorated with flowers and bunting, the Stars and Stripes hanging conspicuously immediately over and in front of the platform.

While a band played softly, the Mayor and other officers entered, His Honor resplendent with ermine and purple, preceded by a sergeant-at-arms bearing a huge gilt mace.

On the arrival of Sir George the procession met him at the door and escorted him to the platform, while the crowds within and without cheered themselves hoarse. General White responded by bowing, and the cheering was prolonged. During the Mayor's speech and the reading of the address by the town clerk, the General was visibly affected.

General Sir George White driving from the Good Hope Gardens after receiving the Address of the Cape Town Corporation. Taken by E. V. H. Melville.

His recent illness was apparent, his eyes being hollow and his cheeks fallen in, while from time to time the muscles of his chin quivered slightly.

When he arose to reply, however, all traces of weakness disappeared ; he was once more the strong, erect General who so bravely defended and sustained, through the long, weary siege, the inhabitants of Ladysmith.

Immediately after the occupation of Bloemfontein, on the 13th of March, there was practically a suspension of all operations, while the army took a much-needed rest, and got ready for the more difficult task ahead, which the advance toward Kronstadt and across the Vaal River presented. While, luckily for the English army, a number

of engines, trucks and carriages were secured when Bloemfontein was taken, making possible the reopening of railway communication to the Orange River, where the Cape Colony line meets it on the other side, yet the destruction of two spans of the railway bridge at this point by the retreating Boers delayed the sending of necessary supplies for many weeks, until the new structure was completed. Meanwhile, Lord Roberts and his staff of assistants issued a variety of proclamations to the Free Staters, promising all sorts of things if they would go back to their farms and be good. Of course, they had to give up their arms.

One day I drifted into the grounds of the Government Building and saw a non-commissioned officer and two privates receiving and recording the guns, as the reluctant but fearful Free Staters brought them in. They were mostly sporting rifles, some very handsome, and their owners gave them up with many questionings as to when they might hope to get them back. It is needless to add that very little satisfaction on that score was given.

Some touching incidents in connection with this occurred. One white-haired old Free Stater brought in a handsome sporting Mauser rifle, a present from his wife, and piteously begged with tears in his eyes to be allowed to retain only a part of his treasure, giving up sufficient parts of the mechanism to render the rifle useless. The appeal was in vain, and the old fellow sadly left the grounds. My sympathy was somewhat tempered when I noticed a number of dum-dum cartridges in the case.

Active campaigning having temporarily come to an end, the tireless staff of war correspondents which accompanied Lord Roberts directed their energies to the editing of the official organ at Bloemfontein, "The Friend." Mr. Percival Landon of "The Times," Mr. E. W. Buxton of the "Daily Telegraph," and Mr. H. A. Gwynne of Reuter's, were the

editing committee. Early numbers soon became unobtainable, so great was the demand for "The Friend," which for the time boasted of the most distinguished staff of contributors in the whole world, considering that the entire staff of war correspondents with Lord Roberts were pressed into its service. With articles from the pens of such men as Bennet Burleigh, our own Julian Ralph, and Rudyard Kipling in its pages, no one will dispute this statement. On March 17th Mr. Kipling wired the following lines from Cape Town. He afterward went to Bloemfontein and took an active part in the editing of the paper.

"Oh, Terence, dear, and did you hear
The news that's going round?
The Shamrock's Erin's badge by law,
Where'er her sons be found.

"From Bobsfontein to Ballyhock,
'Tis ordered by the Queen,
We've won our right in open fight,
The wearing of the green."

Upon the occupation of Bloemfontein a large number of the Orange Free State stamps were discovered, and the Imperial Government at once appropriated them for use, surcharging them with the letters V. R. I. Some of these issues, which had already nearly run out, were immediately bought up by collectors, and soon reached absurd values. The craze grew, and rapidly spread through the rank-and-file of the army, and it was no uncommon thing to see a Tommy and a staff officer side by side in the post-office, artistically pasting stamps a dozen times in value more than necessary on letters for home.

I have personally given but little attention to this subject, because of my entire ignorance of such matters, but I can give collectors one or two hints. The surcharged sixpenny stamp will bring the best price, especially if it is

one in which the periods after the letters have been omitted. This also applies to all the other issues.

Editorial page of "The Friend," containing contributions by Dr. Conan headquarters.

Another thing: only a limited number of issues were legally surcharged; there are some of obsolete issues the holders of which have had privately surcharged, with the

intention of creating rare stamps of great value. It is needless to add that an accurate record of these surchargings

Doyle, the author, and other war correspondents attached to Lord Roberts'

has been kept by the authorities, which will be published in due time, and all frauds exposed. Collectors will do well to exercise caution in buying from dealers and others.

While the English undoubtedly treated the Free Staters

very generously at first, with a view of conciliating them as much as possible, yet these conquered burghers were by no means reconciled to their lot. One of them accompanied me to my hotel from the club one night, and talked over his and his fellow-burghers' woes until the early hours. It was very pathetic to hear his expressions of distress at seeing the victorious British filling the streets, hotels and club. His mixture of excuse and censure of the retreating army, which had allowed his city to so easily fall into the hands of the enemy, was touching, and I came to realize that, while officers and correspondents had been writing home in glowing phrase of "the unparalleled leniency of the generous victor," we had entirely overlooked the fact that every blade of grass or shrub-leaf which our horses, tethered on the club lawn, consumed, unnoticed by us, was duly noted and recorded by the native club members as an instance of the enemy's disregard for their rights.

The semi-barbarous strains of the Highland bagpipe bands grate harshly on the musical ear of the Free Stater, while the hilarious shouting in the streets at night of "Tommy on leave" fills honest burgher hearts with unspeakable bitterness, all the more consuming because of its necessary suppression.

It was a dark day in Bloemfontein when Lord Roberts rode into the little city; and while loyal British subjects throughout that vast empire were shouting "Hurrah for Bobs," and joyously singing "God Save the Queen," there were sad hearts and tears in Bloemfontein.

One day while riding about the camps I found myself at the headquarters of Roberts' horse, the famous mounted regiment of irregulars named after the Field Marshal. Some two months before, while Cronje was still in laager at Paardeburg, an officer of B squadron of this regiment had mistaken me for a Boer, and sent out a squad of men to

arrest me. On displaying my license I became the officer's guest for the night, and rode away the next morning considerably enriched by a part of the spoils of war taken by him the preceding day. This same officer received me again, and, remembering that I was an American, introduced me to Lieutenant J. S. Bradshaw, of Philadelphia, who had been Sergeant of Mounted Police in the 25th

One of the broken spans of the great $2,500,000 bridge across the Orange River at Norval's Poont. This Bridge was blown up with dynamite and gun-cotton by the Boers when General Gatacre advanced to the border of the Free State.

District when cabled to by Lord Roberts to meet him at Cape Town. Mr. Bradshaw immediately invited me to a "Pink Tea," which his mess was giving that same evening, and I as promptly accepted. The regiment was luxuriously quartered in a new row of brick buildings intended for the leper settlement, but which, fortunately, had not yet been occupied for that purpose. The pink tea was held in a large flagstone-paved room, with biscuit-boxes for chairs

and a dissecting-table to hold the really sumptuous repast which Bradshaw's "French *chef*," a Yorkshire Tommy, served up. We had soup, made from a condensed mixture, unnamable, but appetizing; then some tinned fish, whose origin was somewhat obscure; followed by a turkey, which an obliging trooper had risked sixty days' imprisonment to secure; then a roast, the choicest part of a huge ox, slaughtered only that morning for the regiment. How Bradshaw had managed to secure the whiskey and claret I can't guess; but there it was in generous quantities, and no one was rude enough to insinuate "annexation." The distinguished guests were Captain Rogers of the First Canadian contingent, and the famous Canadian scout, Charley Ross (not of kidnapping fame), who, to my great delight, turned out to be an old Klondyker whom I had known in Alaska.

We got to bed, rolled up in blankets on the stone floor, sooner than was to be expected, for the programme included springbok shooting the next morning; this, however, was abandoned when the early dawn showed up grey and cold through a dreary rain which continued to pour down steadily all day long, while the survivors of the pink tea contested the ownership of certain red, white and blue beans by the aid of a very dirty pack of cards.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FREE STATE GIRLS.

LORD ROBERTS rested his army for six weeks at Bloemfontein, re-outfitting it and moving his base of supplies to it from Cape Town. A number of serious fights occurred in the surrounding territory, culminating in a concerted movement of several divisions to drive the remaining commandoes out of the Free State entirely, prior to the general advance northward. The first few I missed seeing, and very fortunately for me, for they were British reverses. The general movement included me, and brought me quite as close to superlative experiences as I care to be. Between times I lived quietly and economically, taking one meal each day at the principal hotels or the club-house, in order to keep in touch with things, or riding out among the camps and outposts, or, to a limited extent, mingling with the social life of the burghers and their families.

As through the crack of a nearly-closed door, I was able to get a glimpse of the beautiful ante-bellum conditions of life in the Free State. The population of the city of Bloemfontein was only four or five thousand, with about five hundred white males of voting age and with burgher privileges. The country is surrounded by a native nation, with whom little communication was held. The obnoxious class of adventurers and the restless element which rushed into the Transvaal on the discovery of the gold-fields of the Rand passed by the Free State, leaving its people to farm and hunt, to attend to the education of their children and the administration of the government unmolested. Their social life in

the towns was that of any county seat in Pennsylvania where the population is about the same numerically. The presence of the blacks, who did all the harder labor, developed an easy way of living and of doing things, not unlike that of our own South, years ago. Political corruption and bribery were unknown. The various problems of administration and general intercourse occasioned by the native population of blacks had been successfully solved. The Imperial authorities publicly admitted that the Free State had probably the most perfect government in the world. A cleaner government and society undoubtedly does not exist anywhere.

Miss Elsa Leviseur of Bloemfontein,* who, as "Miss Bloemfontein," had the brilliant journalistic tilt in the columns of "The Friend" with Mr. Julian Ralph.

Perhaps the most surprising of the many contrasts I met with in South Africa was the difference between the young ladies of Cape Colony and the Free State. The Cape Colony girl is quite English in her appearance and manners; her habits are those of her mother, who, perhaps, came out to the Cape the bride of an energetic young Englishman,

* This beautiful girl above is the eldest daughter of Mr. M. Leviseur, of Bloemfontein, a leading banker and Secretary of the National Museum. When the troops occupied the city and the war correspondents, by request of Lord Roberts, undertook to edit the daily paper, "The Friend," an English correspondent wrote a patronizing letter addressed to the ladies of the town collectively as "Miss Bloemfontein," in which he assumed that the handful of English women-sympathizers who came out to welcome the troops represented the entire town. The tone of the whole letter was unworthy of a man like the writer, and at least one exasperated young woman wrote an answer to him, signing herself "Miss Bloemfontein," which was published, with a reply by the Britisher, which the young lady wisely left unanswered. It is the general opinion among the officers of the army that she had much the better of

to help him build a home and get a start in the new country. The Free State girl is often a mixture of several nationalities; she has the blood of England, France, Germany and Holland in her veins. It was her grandfather, and sometimes his father also, who had left Europe for Africa; she has had fifty to a hundred years longer than the Cape girl in which to draw into her body and soul the atmosphere and spirit of the veldt. Spending her days far from the salt air, among green farms, beside red-brown kopjes, living among a people whose social purity and administrative cleanliness were superior to those of any other nation, she has acquired an air of independence, a freedom of manner, has developed a high quality of self-reliance, and altogether has grown into a healthy, active, full-blooded, up-to-date girl, more like her American sisters that are the girls of any other land.

When the British occupied Bloemfontein, some of the more fortunate of the officers were introduced to a few of the young ladies of the town. Their first remark usually was, "Oh, you have been educated in England," and great was their surprise to hear the reply, "No, I have never been

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the literary bout with the distinguished journalist. Later on, when the Press Concert was given, Miss Leviseur took part as pianist; it was learned that she was a musician and composer of considerable ability. Miss Leviseur holds four diplomas awarded by the Examiners of the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, London. She has also passed matriculating examinations which will procure her admission into any foreign university. Her sole instructor in music has been the Baroness Von Stettler, a Swiss lady who has settled in the Free State. Miss Leviseur comes from a musical family, several members of which have achieved Continental reputation. Her compositions thus far have been confined to the setting of some of Tennyson's verse to music. In company with her father she visited Europe, where she travelled for nearly a year, principally in Germany, returning to the Free State, where she is continuing her musical studies. In addition to music, Miss Leviseur is possessed of marked literary ability, having written a number of stories in addition to her clever reply to Mr. Julian Ralph in "The Friend."

out of the Free State." A few have travelled extensively, but the majority have grown into charming women solely through their ability to adapt to their own uses the best hints and suggestions that they chanced to receive. They are omnivorous readers, and have great adaptability—another point in common with their American sisters, whom they intensely admire as being the most privileged women on earth.

Miss Florence Fraser, Eldest Daughter of Mr. John Fraser, known as "The Free State Nightingale."*

The Free State girl leads an out-of-door life. In town she rides a wheel and plays tennis. Golf was becoming popular before the war began and put a stop to most of the recreations. The Free State is a horse-breeding country, and riding, of course, is one of her accomplishments, a common pastime having been for a party of young folks to ride thirty miles across country to a big farm-house and have a surprise "house party" for a few days.

Music, art and reading were among the Free State girls' indoor diversions, and when the vexatious servant-girl question reached the unsolvable point, she, like any sensible American girl,

* This young lady is the eldest daughter of Mr. John Fraser, Steyn's opponent for the Presidency of the Free State. Being a singer of rare ability, greatly in demand not only in the Free State, but also being frequently sent for, by concerts in the Colony and Natal, she has earned the title under her picture, and it is no exaggeration to say all South Africa is proud of her. At the recent concert given in Bloemfontein by the war correspondents and Lord Roberts, Miss Fraser sang a song specially written for her and the occasion by Rudyard Kipling. The tune was that of "Old Lang Syne," and at its conclusion I had the honor, in behalf of the audience, of requesting her to repeat the song, as they wanted to join in the chorus. The deafening result will long be remembered by those who were present. Miss Fraser's musical

simply rolled up her sleeves and went into the kitchen herself.

Dances were frequent before the war, and two or three times a year the Staadt's President gave a ball at the beautiful Presidency, and foreign visitors who attended saw, marvelled, and then went away to tell of the wonderful girls and women of the Free State.

When war was declared the Free State sister helped her brother to pack his scanty outfit,—for the Boer warrior travels light, and is swift—kissed him good-by, and sent him off with her father and her friends' brothers to fight, and then visited him in his laager to prevent his yearning for home from making him grow faint-hearted.

Now that the enemy has occupied the country and the Boer is a prisoner at St. Helena or still fighting across the border in the Transvaal, the girl sits at home waiting patiently for his return, raising money for his use if he is a prisoner, but uttering no word of complaint to make him, if he is fighting, feel that his place is back at home.

But now the tennis-racquet is laid aside, for there are "orderly horses" stabled in the courts. The bicycle stands in the hall unused, for the Provost Marshal requires the girl to ask for a pass if she will ride, and she is too proud to do so; pony-riding also has been abandoned, for the hateful pass must be obtained for that, too. For the same reason, no more the visiting of country farms; in addition to this is

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education was begun in Bloemfontein. After four years' study she went to Germany, where she made her debut, giving a successful concert in Berlin. She received her finishing instruction in England under Santley, and after giving a second successful concert in London, at Queen's Hall, returned to the Free State. The first time I heard her referred to as the "Free State Nightingale" was by Mr. John Steyn, brother of the President and one of her father's strongest political opponents, and the pride he took in her spoke volumes for the ability of Free State æsthetic appreciation to rise superior to political complications and differences.

the sad fact that many of the most dear ones have been razed to the ground. A deadly feud between her and the Uitlander section of her friends has divided her social circle. The city is full of the ugly khaki uniforms. There is little new to read, and the old has ceased to interest. And last, but not least, all evening parties must break up at half-past eight, when the curfews send all but the military home and to bed.

When the British marched into Bloemfontein the Boer girl closed the house, and in darkness, at midday, threw herself on her bed with her hands over her ears to drown the sound of the enemy marching, and cried bitterly, for her heart was breaking. Now that she feels that the cause of Afrikanderdom is hopelessly lost, she is bravely drying her tears and getting ready to help the returning warrior face the new conditions and to make the best of them. She was, and still is, proud of her country, and though still impatient at the suggestion that as a part of the British Empire a larger field is open for her for the exploitation of the greater personality which she unconsciously holds in reserve, yet she will come to a realization of this and of many more things earlier than her more slowly-thinking brother, and help him to grow more easily into the new conditions.

The Free State girl so impressed me, an American, by her appearance of being of the American type, that she made me quite homesick, and almost as sorry to leave Bloemfontein and go with the Queen's army toward Pretoria as I had been to leave America.

CHAPTER XXV.

TWO OTHER AMERICANS—CAPTAIN SLOCUM, UNITED STATES ATTACHÉ, AND BURNHAM, THE SCOUT.

A FAVORITE headquarters for the few Americans connected with the Imperial army was the house of the military attachés, where Captain Slocum, of the United States army, occupied the best rooms, and there received such of his fellow-countrymen as were fortunate enough to know him. I dropped in on him one afternoon to listen to the refreshing music of the American accent, and shortly afterward Burnham, the American scout, came in also. After introducing us, Captain Slocum reached over to his desk and took up a small bundle of pamphlets, saying, "Boys, I have had something sent to me from the States—three complete sets of 'Billy Baxter's Letters.' They're overflowing with breezy American slang and humor; they're very funny. I want to give each of you a set and keep one for myself. Take them home with you, read them to-night, and then, when you come again, we can laugh together over them. There's no use of my reading or giving them to any of these Englishmen, for they're not familiar with our idioms; American humor is a bit beyond them, too. I've been fairly starving for some one to enjoy these things with." I took my copies, and offer as a free advertisement right here to the publisher of "Billy Baxter's Letters" that they were as a draught of cold water in a parching desert to me and half a dozen other Americans, with whom I enjoyed them repeatedly. Yes, Captain Slocum was right: "Boys, they're simply great."

Thus introduced, I came to know Burnham very well. Our mutual experience of the Klondyke fields was a strong bond of sympathy. He had left French Gulch, twenty-five miles northeast of Dawson City, solely to volunteer his services to Lord Roberts. Burnham had spent some years in South Africa before, and was therefore familiar with the country. He received an appointment on the Field Marshal's staff. During Broadwood's retreat from Th' Banchu, while the fighting was still in progress, Burnham conceived the idea of going out to see the affair. Galloping off, he arrived just in time to be a witness of the Koornspruit disaster. He at once decided to allow himself to be captured, with the idea of acquiring some information from the burghers, and afterward escaping to the British lines. So he quietly rode into the enemy's hands and surrendered himself.

Several days later, while the Boer column was halting at noonday, another prisoner, an English officer, walked up to Burnham, who had concealed his identity, and called him by name. Commandant De Wet (of whom all the world now knows) was lying on the ground under a wagon near by, within earshot. So Burnham tried to make the officer understand, by signs, to be quiet, saying at the same time, coldly, "You are mistaken; that's not my name; I don't know you." The idiotic officer could not understand; he thought Burnham was joking; so he laughed and said,

"Oh, yes, I know you quite well; you are Burnham, Lord Roberts' Chief of Scouts." At this, De Wet sprang up excitedly, crying,

"Ah! So you're Burnham, are you? Well, you're just the man I have been wanting this long time." A double guard was immediately placed in charge of Burnham, who kept him isolated from the other prisoners. The British officer, realizing his mistake too late, made some

effort to apologize, I believe; but was hustled off unceremoniously, even the Boers showing soldierly contempt for such thoughtlessness.

A few days later Burnham learned from the conversation of his guards that they were nearing the railway, and that they and he would then be sent on to Pretoria by train.

Burnham, the American Scout, Chief of Lord Roberts' Scouts, attached to the Field Marshal's Staff with rank of Major, and the only scout who continually penetrated the enemy's lines, returning with information.

Realizing that this would made escape impossible, he decided to lose no time in attempting to get away. The mere fact that the British officer's idiocy had made escape doubly difficult in no way dismayed him. At night, for greater safety, he was placed in a trek-wagon, closely covered, except in front. An armed driver sat on the seat, and guards

rode at each side and at the back. Burnham kept awake, watching his chance, which came when the driver got down to give some directions to the native boy leading the oxen. Burnham crept up on the seat, from which he slipped down to the "disselboom," or cart-tongue, and from there slid gently to the ground, allowing himself to fall prostrate on the ground under the cart, which passed on over him. Of course the guards at either side saw nothing of this; only those on the back of the cart were to be feared. Burnham lay perfectly still, prepared to endure even a horse's tread on his body without giving a sign. The night was fairly dark, the horses of the following cart stepped carefully over him, and their riders "just happened" not to look downward. The next cart, drawn by oxen, was some distance behind, and before they had come up Burnham had rolled swiftly to the side of the road, where he again lay motionless until the cart had passed; then, before another cart came, he had gone far enough to allow him to roll on for several hundred yards, until so far from the line of transports that he could dare to get on his hands and knees, and crawl still farther into night and safety.

About this time his escape was discovered. The column halted, and many lights appeared. Horsemen rode up and down the line shouting, a few shots were fired at nothing in particular, other horsemen scattered rapidly on either side to explore the veldt, and several came very close to where Burnham was lying, but in the darkness he looked so much like any clump of grass about him that he escaped notice. Had the pursuers waited until daylight he must have been discovered.

Finally the column moved on, and after waiting a proper time Burnham rose to his feet and struck off southward for Bloemfontein. After two days and two nights on the veldt, lying hidden by day on the summits of friendly kopjes, from

where he could see occasional Boer scouts presumably on the lookout for him, he succeeded in reaching Bloemfontein safely, having been for most of the time entirely without food. He had gained important information from the careless conversation of his guards, and accomplished his purpose after it had been made infinitely more difficult by the stupidity of the thick-headed English officer who revealed his identity.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WITH GENERAL FRENCH AFTER GENERAL DE WET.

THE most striking figure produced by the war is that of General De Wet. He is the leader of the Irreconcilables, and is by far the most able General the war has developed on either side. He first sprang into notice as a mere commandant after the capture of Bloemfontein, when all active resistance in the Free State had practically ceased. De Wet with two faithful followers slipped quietly down into the southeastern part of the Free State, where thousands of burghers had returned to their farms, having surrendered part of their arms and taken an oath of neutrality. Going to a reoccupied farm, De Wet called on the burghers to come out with their rifles and follow him. At first they refused, but when De Wet leveled his Mauser at their heads, calling them "traitors," they obeyed at once. As he gathered a small commando about him in this way he went from farm to farm himself, sending out parties of three men each all over that section of the country, until within a week over four thousand men gathered together at the rendezvous he had appointed. All were well-armed and equipped with ammunition and good horses. They were in the richest farming part of the country, and could forage easily and successfully. From the fragments remaining of Cronje's last stand and the smaller oppositions to the invasion at Poplar Grove and Driefontein, De Wet with the assistance of only two other men had created over night, as it were, a new and most formidable army. The first thing of note De Wet did was to attack a pacification

expedition which had gone forty miles to Th' Banchu, due east from Bloemfontein, gathering forage and distributing proclamations. While this party was returning De Wet pursued it steadily for a day until within twenty miles of Bloemfontein, a stubborn rear-guard defence having been kept up. Night falling, the English troops under General Broadwood made camp near the waterworks within sight of an English outpost a few miles nearer the city. During the night De Wet sent part of his force around in front of the British, where they concealed themselves in the dry bed of a small

General Stevenson directs the placing of the field artillery at the Battle of Leuykop.

stream called Koornspruit. As General Broadwood resumed his march at daybreak, and the transports reached the spruit, the Boers, without firing a shot, captured the wagons as they went across the drift, until, after an incredibly long time, the alarm was given and the fighting began. The result was that the English were compelled to bolt for Bloemfontein, while De Wet's coup netted him two batteries of seven guns, ninety transports with supplies, and about five hundred prisoners. This was called the Koornspruit Disaster or the Battle of Sanna's Post. The blame for the affair has never been definitely fixed upon any one but De Wet.

Shortly after this, five companies of the Irish Rifles were surprised near Edenberg and captured. Survivors of the fight said that, contrary to their usual custom, the Boers, instead of fighting only from behind cover, actually charged up a long slope at the companies, surrounding them, and effecting a complete surrender, with very little loss of life on either side. My old friend Captain Tennant, Press Censor under Gatacre, was captured here, having ridden out "to see the show." This was De Wet's second coup. Shortly afterward the English garrison at Wepner, under Colonel Dalgety, was invested by General De Wet, and, as a result, about five columns of English troops, numbering in all at least forty thousand, were set in motion to relieve Wepner and capture De Wet.

General De Wet's persistency and tenacity of purpose are said to be due to the fact that he has lost in this war almost every member of his family. He is the leader of the irreconcilables; his appearance at the darkest hour of the war and his brilliant successes at once revived the flagging spirits of burgherdom, and undoubtedly prolonged the war.

Bloemfontein was a city of mysteries and rumors. Plots of a hundred kinds were continually unearthed; scores of weapons concealed in cellars or buried in gardens, and told of by treacherous servants, sent whole families across the border—the men to St. Helena, the women to friends or strangers in the colony. Movements of troops were kept secret; many officers were afraid to give even a correspondent-friend a hint. The wiser of us asked no questions, but kept our eyes on the supply-depot and the transport-camps. One day in April a transport-contractor said to me, "We are getting two hundred ox-teams ready for day after to-morrow." When "to-morrow" came I was in the saddle, mounted on a new pony presented to me a few

days before by Mr. John Steyn, brother of the President, who was a semi-prisoner on his farm, eight miles south of Bloemfontein. There was no doubt of the direction the movement had taken. A thousand oxen and their wagons leave a track even on paved streets; so, following the new road across the veldt, I knew it was only a question of time before I would overtake the transports, and near by would be the fighting force, which must be considerable, to have needed so many teams. By noon I agreed with an-

The firing-line resting between the rushes and watching the shells explode on the enemy's position. The photograph was taken under a heavy artillery and rifle-fire from both sides.

other correspondent, with whom I was riding, that there were three columns, for the wagon-tracks were separating, taking different directions. Which to follow was a serious question, since we knew not the plans of the movement.

A dull boom of cannon half a dozen miles ahead decided the question for us, and half an hour's hard riding brought us up with General Stevenson's brigade, where his artillery was pounding away on the enemy's position at Leuykop, about twenty miles east of Bloemfontein. A small battle was in progress. The enemy were scattered

along a range of kopjes for three or four miles. General French, with the cavalry brigade, had gone on several hours before; the infantry division, following under General Pole-Carew, found itself opposed by the Boers, General Stevenson with his brigade endeavoring to dislodge them from their position. As we came up Stevenson was just indicating to a staff officer where he wanted the second battery to take position. I followed the young lieutenant with the guns, watched them unlimber, load and fire for half an hour at a clump of trees three miles off at the

Creeping up on the farm through the tall grass in the swamp. English shells bursting prematurely overhead. Five men were lost here.

base of a kopje, and which I knew was an old homestead belonging to some Free State farmer who himself was in the firing-line with his countrymen, or perhaps a prisoner at St. Helena with General Cronje, whose army was almost entirely recruited from this region. Then I attached myself to a squadron of Roberts' light horse, who were directed to ride out to protect the flank while the guns moved up half a mile closer. Seeing that the squadron would soon be out of action and sight of the fight, I left them, and in company with several artillery scouts rode on

ahead to within a mile of the farm; then, turning to its left, we rode till we were abreast of it. Behind we could see the English shells falling, scattering great clouds of dust where they exploded. A dozen or more Boers were riding furiously across an open space for cover behind a farther kopje; the British shells, evidently doing no harm, yet confusing the enemy greatly.

The Welsh Regiment being driven back behind the farmyard wall. An English shell bursting against the kopje in the background. From this wall Captain Prothero led the charge which resulted in his death.

The scouts pushed on another hundred yards, till we could get a complete view of the new positions taken up by the enemy; then the ranking Tommy ordered one of the others to return and make his report. While talking he took out his pipe, and was in the act of lighting it as the other man started off. Simultaneously there came a sharp "pop-pop" from our left, and for the first time we noticed that we were within five hundred yards of a kopje; then two bullets "zinged" through the air close by. Tommy looked up from his pipe with a grin and said, "The bloody beggars! they're shootin' at us;" then, as he took another

puff, three more shots followed, this time the bullets splashing up little puffs of dust just ahead of us.

"I guess we'll be gettin' out o' this," energetically came from behind the pipe as Tommy turned his horse and vigorously applied whip and spur. I quickly took the lead, having a better horse, and rode directly in front of him; then, as I noticed the bullets coming faster and spitting up suggestive splashes of dust in a line straight ahead, I decided to ride off to one side, preferring a scattered to a concentrated fire. For half a mile we galloped, the Tommies keeping up a rattling exchange of chaff, asking each other, "Wot's your hurry—forgot somethin'? Wait a bit, I'm comin' with you. I dropped my water-bottle; guess I'll not bother about goin' back for it," and so on. When we reached a donga, cut ten feet deep in the veldt by heavy rains, we dismounted and took account of stock. A few things had been dropped, and one of the boys had a bullet in his haversack. I noticed my pony held one leg rather stiffly, and a further examination discovered a little hole—white edges with a dark-red centre—in his left thigh. It seemed to be only a flesh wound, and, as I could not leave my saddle there, I led the animal on toward the farm, where I could see the skirmish-line closing in.

When near the end man, I looked over his head at the kopjes we had just left so unceremoniously, then along the line of his comrades, lying panting on their faces, waiting for the order to rush another hundred yards before the next rest. The enemy were leaving the farm grounds at this time and a fierce artillery duel was raging over our heads, the shells flying in both directions. Then from the kopje which had spoken sharply to us a short time before came the quick, irritating barking of a Boer pom-pom—a rapid-fire gun of large bore—firing in quick succession a dozen explosive shells of small size. Where they fell, sev-

eral hundred yards away, two or three companies scattered rather quickly, and a whole regiment promptly lay down in the grass. Then the pom-pom turned its attention to the mounted troops. The first shell, as I afterward learned, went through the body of the Colonel of Roberts' horse, a gentleman whose guest I had been a few days previously,

Like locusts on the dam-wall, firing at the Boers as they "cleared."

and who had received his promotion less than a week before. He died the following day, and was about the sixth personal friend I had lost since joining the army.

The Warwicks along the north wall firing with smokeless powder under heavy artillery and "pom-pom" fire from the enemy.

We were now close to the farmyard walls, and crawling through the high grass of a swamp, while the concentrated fire of three batteries was passing directly overhead, and some of the British shells exploding prematurely above us. We lost five men in the swamp; then we rushed the farm,

getting over the walls and taking cover behind a row of trees and the side-wall farther on.

The enemy had retired to the kopjes beyond, against the sides of which our shells could be seen bursting. Several men dropped near me slightly wounded, and a few who had ventured beyond the wall were killed or badly wounded. Along another wall the Warwick regiment was firing at the enemy, their smokeless-powder Lee-Metfords making a continuous rattle. To take a photograph of this scene I was compelled to mount my horse, being for the time exposed to the enemy's fire. In the corner of the walls the galloping Maxim rapid-fire gun had halted, and its officers were peppering away, one of them remarking,

"I cawn't see a bloody Boah; but we'll let them have a few rounds, anyway."

Back of the farmhouse the young women, who had been nearly frightened to death an hour before by the bombardment, were busily engaged in making and selling tea at thruppence a cup to the straggling Tommies and the officers, while their best rooms were being turned into a temporary hospital for the wounded. The ladies and their brother did not make the slightest objection to posing for their photographs, only asking me to wait until the next day, when they could "dress up a bit." Of course I obliged them, but I was compelled to ride back several miles to do so, for shortly after, just as the sun was setting, I followed the Welsh regiment in an assault on the kopjes, which they carried successfully. As a reward for their work—some military rewards are peculiar—they were compelled to lie all night on its summit, half-freezing, and waiting till midnight for the water-carts to come up, they not having had any water since four o'clock that morning.

That night, while talking around the fire with the officers,

I learned that General Colville, with his division, was to the north; General Dickson was ahead, with the cavalry; we were with the infantry division, under General Pole-Carew, and our destination was an indefinite somewhere, to round up the guerrilla chief General De Wet and create

The galloping Maxim in the corner. "I cawn't see a bloody Boah; but we'll let them have a few rounds, anyway."

another Paardeburg. But the first duty of all was to rest, for the day's work had been very hard. No time was wasted in camp fun or in swapping yarns, but while dozing off to sleep I heard a Tommy, in the most pronounced tone of satisfaction, repeating sleepily to himself,

"We charged up the kopgee; we charged up the kopgee."

CHAPTER XXVII.

AN ECHO OF "THE SHOT HEARD ROUND THE WORLD."

WHILE the noise and excitement was at its height, I saw my friend Hodgetts of "The Express" riding along the lower wall, behind which the Welsh regiment was under cover. Closely following him, and bending low in the saddle, were two red-collared staff officers. As they came nearer, I recognized the young Dukes of Westminster and Marlborough. They rode up to the wall, where they hastily tied their ponies to a tree, and then sat down on the ground at the base of a twelve-foot wall, well under its cover, crouching low, as though that would make their position still safer.

They evidently well appreciated the necessity of taking good care of their dukeships. This was not cowardice, nor even selfishness, for had anything happened to either of these precious young gentlemen, somebody high in the service would probably have had to suffer severely for it. As the Duke of Westminster said to me, as he rode up,

"I don't suppose we should be here at all; but we wanted to see something of the fight, you know." They were both very proud of the affair at the time, for it was their first experience under fire. Some weeks later I asked the Duke of Westminster at Brandfort what he thought of the fighting that day, and he answered,

"Oh, it wasn't such a very hot fire, you know."

Coming back, after a run up to the house for a drink of water, to the corner where the Maxim was at work, I saw that another attempt had been made by the men of the

Welsh regiment to rush the Boers in the kopjes. A heavy fire from the enemy drove them back, three or four dropping, while several others were slightly wounded. I came up just in time to see the men falling back and clambering over the wall.

Then two sets of stretcher-bearers went out to carry in the wounded men. Here was a golden opportunity to get

Miss Dresser, Colonel Slogget, the Duke of Westminster, and Lord Cecil Manners of the "Morning Post," en route from London to Cape Town. Taken by E. H. V. Melville.

photographs of this incident, and I went out into the open with my kodak and snapped half a dozen films. The sun was almost at the horizon, and I was somewhat excited. The stretcher-bearers were running, and when they came back to the wall I had to drop my camera to help lift the stretcher, with its load, over to safety behind. All this resulted in my pictures being partly spoiled, either by insufficient exposure, due to poor light, or else, in my excitement, I moved the camera and blurred the photographs. About ten min-

utes after the last man was brought in I was standing by the Maxim when a Tommy called to me, "The Captain is still out there." While he was pointing out to me just where the Captain fell, I saw a tall figure jump over the wall some distance below me and run out to where the Captain lay, sixty to a hundred yards out, he having fallen at least twenty-five yards ahead of any of his men. It was an ambulance surgeon, whose name I afterward learned was Moore. Going up to the Captain, he quickly laid down beside him. At first I thought he had been shot, but after a minute's examination he stood up, and I saw him trying to lift the wounded Captain upon his shoulder. The officer was a heavy man, and the doctor was having a good bit of trouble. Just then at their feet I saw a splash of dust a foot or so high, then another and another, and I knew that the enemy was firing on them. "Great Scott! They don't see that they are firing on a rescuing party," I thought.

I ran out to help the doctor, and as I came up to him he said, "Help me get him on my back." I tried, but the man was too heavy, so the doctor rolled the upper half of him into my arms, holding the other end himself, and we started to run back. Half way we dropped our burden for a rest. "Zing! zing!" sounded overhead.

"Why, those devils are shooting at us!" I gasped.

"Certainly, answered the doctor. "Come, we mustn't stay here. Don't stop to lift him; take hold of his straps!" and, seizing him by his belt and breast-leathers, we dragged him another twenty-five yards. Then two Tommies came to our help, and the four of us lifted the Captain and carried him back and over the wall, and laid him down on the clean grass behind the Maxim, where further surgical assistance came to Dr. Moore. I went over to where the Dukes were sitting, and, thoroughly exhausted, threw myself down on the ground to rest.

The thought that the Boers had been shooting at the doctor and while we were plainly a rescuing party put me in a fury. I thought to myself, "They didn't hit us because they were in their hearts so ashamed of their act that they could not aim straight." An officer came up, and, pointing to a smear of blood on my breast and sleeve, said, "I hope you are not hurt?" No, I wasn't, but I was getting very angry. Then, as I thought of how my little mare had been crippled—the one that a night or so before had stepped over me while I was half-asleep on the veldt, carefully lifting her feet so as not to step on me—a lump seemed to come up in my throat, and I am not ashamed to own to a moistening of the eyes. Just then I heard the men shouting,

Men of the Welsh Regiment exposing themselves to the enemy's fire to help the stretcher-bearers lift their burden over the stone wall.

The stretcher-bearers of the Welsh Regiment returning to the stone wall, under fire, with a wounded comrade.

"There they go! They're clearing!"

I jumped up, and there, sure enough, were those ant-like specks on the veldt, half a mile away, swiftly gliding up the slope of the veldt toward the kopjes. The soldiers all around were firing furiously. The thought of my little mare and the wounded Captain urged me to action. I took a rifle out of a Tommy's hand, and, lifting it to my shoulder, took a long, careful aim at the little group of fast-riding Boers. My finger was on the trigger, and I was about to

"The orderly in the way." Sir John Milbank, General Dickson and General French. (See page 243.)

pull; but something seemed to say, "You'll be sorry for this some day," and I dropped the gun for a second. I raised it again with a smile at my sentimentality; and then, as I shifted it a little to get the range, which had increased considerably in the few seconds I had wasted, I seemed to see a familiar picture in one of my old school-books. It was the rough wood-cut of the gathering at Lexington, showing several dead bodies stretched on the village green, with a file of redcoats, smoking rifles in hand,

drawn up opposite; then out of the retreat to Boston, with Yankee Boers behind every tree and farm wall pouring their flint-lock fire on the disordered column, while the church-bells all over the country were ringing wildly; then I saw the charge up Bunker's Hill, the disordered flight down, the final taking of the crest at the point of the bayonet; in short, the "Shot heard round the world"

The Ninth Lancer cuts the wire fencing. Notice the stone posts, which are less costly than wood.

came thundering down the century into the heart of the veldt, and I heard its echo in South Africa. These are the things I seemed to see and hear while looking through the sights of a British rifle in the Free State; and as I realized that those little black specks, now almost reaching the cover of the kopjes, were merely minute-men of another century riding for freedom that they might continue to fight for liberty and independence, as my ances-

tors had doubtless done many times, I dropped the rifle, and to this day I devoutly thank God I did not fire the shot. Since then the waving folds of the American Flag have had a different meaning to me, and I do not hesitate to adopt a British custom in respect to it—the Englishman always raises his hat when he passes his country's flag.

General Gordon looks at the enemy's position for General French, Sir John Milbank coming up behind.

The next day, after photographing the ladies, I rode on to catch up with General French, who was in command of the two divisions. About ten o'clock I met General Dickson, in command of the cavalry, who seemed somewhat amused at my request for a pose, but willingly stood while I aimed my kodak at him. He advised me to remain with him, and promised that I would see some more fighting. Shortly afterward several shots rang out from a near-by farm. A barb-wire fence prevented the approach of the squadron ordered out to occupy the place, and I succeeded in taking the picture of a very nervous Tommy in the act of cutting the wires. The enemy retired on the advance of the troops, and the farm buildings were burned. Soon we met General French, and while the two generals were talking I attempted to photograph them. Finding some difficulty, I asked General French to request his orderly

to get out of the way. A peculiar smile passed over his face as, in reply, he introduced me to Sir John Milbank, one of the wealthiest men in England, and the winner of the first Victoria Cross awarded during the war. Sir John recognized the introduction rather coldly, and there was a general grin on the faces of the rest of the staff. However, one of the richest men in England did move out of my way, and I secured a picture of the two cavalry Generals who did most of the fighting in this war.

Advance line waiting the order to rush over the ridge of the kopje. The Boer position is less than two hundred yards distant. Dead and wounded only on top of the ridge.

Continuing the march, in about an hour we reached another wire fence, supported on stone pillars, for stone was cheaper than wood in that country. While one of the Ninth Lancers was cutting the wires, I took another photograph; and, by a strange coincidence, I was to take another picture of him before nightfall, but under very different circumstances.

We had hardly passed through the cutting when one of the scouts came galloping back to General French with

the report that a body of about two hundred Boers were coming up to a ridge of kopjes a mile in front. Two regiments were ordered to occupy the ridge, while the Generals and their staffs turned to the right and rode up on a small kopje half a mile farther away. Through the eyes of Sir John Milbank, who used a telescope, and of several other officers who were similarly occupied, General French watched the movements. Firing by this time was heavy. After an hour or more the artillery were ordered up to the ridge. I made a short cut across the valley, hearing, as I rode, a strange whispering murmur high overhead. This was the sound of bullets aimed at the Generals' staffs, and

On top of the ridge. The Ninth Lancer wire-cutter shown on page 241. Shot through the heart in the first encounter.

shortly after I left a horse was hit within a short distance of General French. As I reached the ridge the artillery, which had preceded me at a gallop, were retiring. The rifle firing had ceased, the regiments were marching back. I was about to mount the summit when I heard a shot, then a squeal like a pig, then a man came hopping down, holding one foot in his hand. A few lancers came by at the same time. We put the wounded man on a horse and he was taken to the rear. On his advice I remained where I was, for he said, "There are only dead and wounded on top, and the Boers are only two hundred yards away." Then he and his bearers left me, while I waited for the reinforcements. In ten minutes I discovered, to my disgust,

that the British had been retreating to the ridge I had left

Then the enemy opened fire with cannon and pom-poms, aiming close to the summit beneath which I was waiting. A few of their shells fell short and exploded near by, still further increasing my disgust. I then realized that it was too late for me to retire, as the enemy had probably occupied the near ridge, and by going back I would only expose

On top of the ridge. Four more of the Ninth Lancers. Captain Stanley mortally wounded, at the left. Shot within fifty yards of the Boer position.

myself to their fire at close range. As a matter of fact they did come up to the ridge, taking rifles, field-glasses and pistols from the wounded men on top, and then retired to their former positions.

In another quarter of an hour several regiments and the artillery returned, and then for another hour they lay along the back of the ridge in readiness to open fire when the

flank movement of a portion of the cavalry should compel the Boers to leave their position. This was accomplished, the cavalry riding four or five miles to get around, and then the majority of the Boers began their retreat. Before this I had amused myself and a lot of the soldiers by holding my hat up in the air on my riding-whip; and, strange to say, while the Boers are good shots, out of twenty, at least, fired at my hat, not a single bullet took effect. When the

On top of the ridge. Captain Stanley, of the Ninth Lancers, mortally wounded. The ambulance men dressing his wounds on the field. Captain Stanley died a few days later from exhaustion and loss of blood, having received three bad wounds.

first lot of Boers started to ride off a few of our men began to fire at them, but immediately stopped, for the enemy, safely covered by a stone wall only a short distance away, picked them off as soon as they showed themselves. And so about forty men held back the English and covered the retreat of their comrades, and then one by one they, too, rode off. If the English had but known—but "if" is the most significant word in war.

When the firing ceased I ran over the crest of the ridge, and almost fell over a man lying on his face. I rolled him over and saw he was dead, shot through the heart. Then, as the sun was shining brightly on him, I stepped back and photographed him—the body of the same man photographed a few hours before, while cutting a wire fence.

Meanwhile the artillery had been brought into position, and was threatening destruction to the small groups of Boers riding across the veldt without the slightest cover, the shells following them for at least three miles; but, as

On top of the ridge. The last man in the group of four. Though mortally wounded, the sergeant wants a smoke, and gets it.

far as I could learn afterward, without effect. By this time more men were following me over the ridge, and I took another photograph, showing four soldiers who had fallen comparatively close together, the first quite dead, the others mortally wounded. One of them was a captain whom I watched while the field surgeon bound up his wounds. He died the following day from exhaustion, having had a leg broken in two places, causing great loss of blood. The last man had received hasty relief when I came up to him and offered assistance. All I could do was to fill his pipe, and I left him contentedly smoking and waiting for the

stretcher-bearers. Then I went over to the deserted position of the enemy and found one dead Boer, his arms and bandolier already taken away by the English. This was the only man killed on their side, and but two had been wounded, yet their party had caused a loss of thirty-six to the English and held in check for five hours General French's division of five thousand men.

On top of the ridge in the Boer position. The only dead Boer I ever saw, and one of the forty who, acting as rear guard for the commando of two hundred, held back General French's entire Brigade of five thousand men for five hours. This is "the one killed" of the despatches. British loss at the same place, thirty-six.

Riding back toward the headquarters staff, I passed a little group of men and officers around several Kaffirs who were digging a hole in the ground, and near by, wrapped in his blanket, I took my third and last photograph of the lancer who had cut his last wire. In contrast with this scene, a little farther away was a Kaffir kraal, where the Tommies were in high glee over an opportunity to buy fresh eggs and chickens from the

natives at ridiculously low prices, and the opportunity to loot a few.

The next day, while with General Dickson, we met Colonel Richardson, from Rundle's division, and found that the enemy, about five thousand strong, had slipped away and escaped because they did not believe, as did the English, that three sides of a square covered by British troops meant that they were surrounded. Later I was a witness of the meeting between General Rundle and Gen-

On top of the ridge. Last picture of the Ninth Lancer wire-cutter—burial on the field.

eral French, when the latter, having made a blunder damaging to his reputation, roundly abused General Rundle for the mistake he himself had made; but such abuse is among the privileges of commanding officers, and is a time-honored custom.

Leaving the army halted on the veldt, I galloped on to Dewetsdorp, meeting some of General Chermside's troops on their way out. They had occupied the city the evening before. At the Free State Hotel I met a lot of the correspondents who had been with the Third

division at Sterkstrom when I was with General Gatacre, and we had a highly enjoyable time after our long separation. Early the next morning I started back to Bloemfontein.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WAR ON WOMEN, CHILDREN AND HOMES.

DURING this futile pursuit of De Wet, the raider, I had spent sufficient time on the extreme advance line to be an eye-witness to the great consideration shown to the families of the warring burghers whenever the troops came up to a farmhouse. Everything the advance line took for their use, from eggs and chickens to cattle and forage, was paid for on the spot. On my return to Bloemfontein over the same path I found that the stragglers had not been so considerate. One farm where I spent the night had been completely denuded even of the shrubbery and trees about the house. Where there had been plenty of stock, several hundred chickens and geese, and forage in plenty, the poor Dutch vrouw did not have left in the house even enough rye bread for a single meal. She had been paid for a few of her things, but the rest had been stolen by the stragglers.

At another point I stopped at a farmhouse where half a dozen soldiers were chasing and catching the few chickens that remained. This was directly contrary to regulations, so I asked the men what authority they had for foraging. They replied that one of their officers had helped himself, and they saw no reason why they should not follow his example. By the gate, with her frightened children hanging to her skirts, the hausvrouw stood crying bitterly. There was nothing to be done; the woman was bound to be robbed sooner or later anyway, and the few shillings I might have compelled the soldiers to give her would be of very little

help. I foresaw that if much of this sort of thing was to take place, the British would have to resort to Weyler's reconcentrado policy, and collect all the women and children in the towns and cities to prevent starvation.

Nearer Bloemfontein I came upon a more striking and pitiable scene of desolation. This was a farmhouse where a few days before I had turned aside from the column to get a glass of water. The hausvrouw had sent her little

General F. Stevenson of General French's division, and Colonel Richardson, of General Rundle's division, meeting four miles outside of Dewetsdorp. "Where is De Wet?"

girl for the water, which she brought me in a pretty china cup. General French's Chief of Staff was talking to the burgher, who was one of those who had surrendered his arms and taken the oath of allegiance. Several white flags were flying overhead as a sign of neutrality. This place was entirely in ashes, still smoking. The farmer's wife and children were camped in an outbuilding, with a few articles of bedding saved from the house. I had seen the smoke

of the burning house half an hour after I had left it, but supposed it was only a huge pile of forage being consumed to avoid its falling into the hands of the Boers. I learned that just after I left the place a party of Boers had occupied the farm, and one of their pickets had fired on the scouts of the passing army. Information of this was conveyed to the British General. He ordered out a squadron of horse to clear the farm of the Boers, which

General French and General Rundle meet near Dewetsdorp and discuss General De Wet's escape. Three sides of a square closed don't make a trap.

they did. Then the place was burned; the old burgher and his son were made prisoners. I afterward met the officer who had charge of this work, and he said "It was the most miserable piece of business I have ever had to do." His men poured oil over the furniture and woodwork, allowing only a few of the barest necessaries to be removed; and then, despite the pitiable pleadings of the women and children and the frantic protests of the old, white-haired grandfather, the torch was applied, and one more desolate

home was added to the already too long list which this unhappy war had produced.

This was but the beginning. I was half-prepared for what was to follow, for I had heard at Dewetsdorp that, since the expedition had been a failure, orders had been issued from Bloemfontein that no more supplies would be sent out to French's division. This meant that they were to live off the country, and that, somehow, excuses were to be found to ignore the proclamations of protection guaranteed by the Field Marshal. So parties of scouts were sent out to search the farms for concealed weapons and ammunition. A rusty old gun or a handful of forgotten cartridges was sufficient evidence; then the cattle, sheep and horses were rounded up, all the carts about the place loaded with anything of value the marauders desired, the match was applied, and a few prisoners were added to the already over-long lists.

Between twenty and thirty homesteads were destroyed between Dewetsdorp and Bloemfontein to my certain knowledge, and it is very probable that twice that number were added to the list by other detachments of French's troops.

In each case—after the punishment had been inflicted—some form of trial was given at Bloemfontein. Of course the prisoners had very little opportunity to defend themselves, and usually they were convicted and sent to Cape Town. Some show of justice was obtained, however. The burgher who had owned the first farm destroyed, and his son also, were actually acquitted, as it was shown that they had not taken part in the firing on the troops, and had protested against it; so, after having lost their home and been marched eighty miles as prisoners, they were released. By this time the son had gone insane. I doubt if any compensation was made other than the filing of their claims, to be settled after the conclusion of hostilities.

This policy of burning has evidently been continued on a much larger scale since I left the country. Just before the close of the year 1900 I received a letter from Bloemfontein, written by as loyal a subject of the Republics as ever lived. The letter read, "De Wet and Steyn are still fighting. I wish they would give in, for there is no hope that their efforts will be of any benefit, and if they continue there will not be a single farmhouse left standing in the Free State." As to the British side of the question, Gen-

Tommies buying chickens from natives for a shilling each. Only a few were looted from the Kaffirs.

eral French returned to Bloemfontein, and the London papers published the news that he had brought in over three thousand head of cattle, and many more sheep, and a large number of horses, and that the supplies brought in were sufficient in value to defray the cost of the expedition.

On entering the Free State and taking Bloemfontein, Lord Roberts had issued a proclamation to the effect that if the burghers would come in, surrender their arms, and take the oath of neutrality, they would receive passes from

the Provost Marshal, and be allowed to go back to their farms. Many of the burghers did this. Afterward, owing to Lord Roberts' failure to give them the promised protection, Boer raiders swept down, accused them of disloyalty, looted their farms, and escaped before troops could arrive. Later, when the English needed supplies, it was not difficult, owing to their own negligence, to find proof that the burgher had rendered assistance to the enemy; so arrests and burnings followed, with confiscation of the remaining live stock and real estate. Other burghers, seeing their neighbors thus ground between two millstones, seeing that in any event they were doomed to lose everything, naturally took up arms again with their compatriots, driven to renew the fight to the bitter end; and so all this barbarism of warfare may be traced directly to the kind-hearted and best-intentioned Lord Roberts issuing a proclamation which, when complied with, left the burghers defenceless against their own people, while the imperial troops were unable to afford the protection which, in strict justice and according to promise, should have been afforded.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE GENERAL ADVANCE NORTHWARD FROM BLOEMFONTEIN.

ON Sunday and Monday, the last two days of April, the journalistic and military atmosphere of Bloemfontein was heavy with rumors of the approaching general advance northward, for which we had been waiting impatiently for so long. All night long the creaking, groaning transport-carts, with their screaming native drivers, had toiled wearily through the streets, their harsh harmony occasionally varied by the clatter of a mounted orderly riding at full gallop, until the everlasting iteration of "Halt! who goes there?" and, "Advance, friend, and give the countersign," of the stalwart sentry just outside my window, was followed by the relaxed and mechanical "Pass, friend, all's well," and the clatter of hoofs was renewed.

Early Tuesday morning, in obedience to an impulse which I have long learned to trust implicitly, I strolled, camera in hand, across the market square. Some troops were passing through in heavy marching attire, transports were spaced in between, and a huge traction-engine was snorting and rattling clumsily by. I joined a small group of citizens, one or two correspondents, several ladies and a few officers who were watching the procession. One of the correspondents looked at me significantly; his eyes dropped to my camera; then he looked at the ladies and the two officers with them, standing a little apart from the rest of us. "Great Scott!" thought I to myself, "surely that little man in fatigue uniform is Lord Roberts, and the ladies are his

daughters; the other officer is General Pole-Carew, and the sunlight falls exactly right."

The camera opens with a click; the engine rolls by, and Lord Roberts half turns to watch it. Click!—and I have a profile. He starts to walk away; the ladies wait; "Bobs" turns around; I have the focus exactly; I look up to see if I have everything right, and catch his eye while my thumb is on the button.

"What are you trying to do?" ask his eyes.

Lord Roberts and his daughters watching advance northward from Market Square, Bloemfontein. My first photograph of him.

"Photograph the Field Marshal" mine reply. I wait, while for three seconds he regards me gravely; then a half smile appears on his kind face; it says,

"All right, go ahead!"

I press the button by His Excellency's permission, close the camera with a snap, turn another film into place, look up, and find the chief still watching me gravely. I am half-frightened, but play the game out by bringing my right hand up to my hat, giving the military salute. Lord

Roberts waits half a second, then smiles kindly again, and turning, walks off, followed by the ladies. My interview—my telepathic interview—with "Bobs" is over, and I am the richer by two photographs of the Field Marshal and his daughters.

Later I had some conversation with General Pole-Carew, who, while not giving me any direct advice, suggested that I get on toward Karee Siding as quickly as possible.

My interview with "Bobs," and the second photograph.

While with General French, on the way to Dewetsdorp, one morning, as I was crossing a drift, I came on General Pole-Carew. He smiled pleasantly at me as I stopped to water my horse beside his, and I introduced myself as an "American correspondent." Usually I found this a good thing to do, and this was no exception, for I found "the most popular man in the English army" very delightful to talk to about my country.

After a few minutes we rode on together, and I made bold to ask him how he pronounced his name; that is,

whether it was "Pole Caroo" or "Pole Cary." The General laughed and said, "I am always being asked that question." Then he told me how it was pronounced, and I would be very glad to pass on the information, but unfortunately I have quite forgotten it myself, and did not make a note of it at the time. But an officer of the Guards confided to me that the General really was "Polly Cary."

At noon I rode on after the troops, over new veldt

General Pole-Carew (Pole Cary?) in the Market Square, Bloemfontein.

which was conspicuously free from the all-pervading stenches of the Modder River treks, only an occasional whiff taking me back to the days of Paardeburg, with their frightful mortality of transport-horses and oxen.

Toward evening I came within sight of Karee, where I could see the army encamped. I was tired, and did not care to spend the night in camp, so I tied my pony to a tree and slept blissfully on the open veldt, away from the noise and clamor beyond. Wednesday was a day of rest for the soldiers, who had marched twenty-two miles the

day before. I invaded the camp, found a few friends who informed me of the plans for the dash on Brandfort the next day at sunrise, and then spent the rest of the time lounging around and taking a few photographs, until toward evening I crept up to the outposts, sleeping there on the top of the kopjes, with my pony near by, ready to ride on at dawn with the heavy masses of khaki-clad men I saw sleeping on their arms in the laagte below. The strictest

"Mother, come quickly; the 'Rooineks' are searching the house."

silence was observed. Not the slightest idea did the English have of the strength or position of the enemy.

The Imperial army commenced its march at daybreak. General Stevenson with the Guards, Welsh, Warwicks and Essexes, was in the centre. General Tucker with the mounted infantry was on the right flank, General Pole-Carew was on the left. The flanks were to advance and make an effort to encircle the supposed Boer position at Brandfort, fourteen

miles distant across the open veldt, while Stevenson with the centre expected to meet with heavy resistance. I was soon in the saddle, picking my way across the veldt with the scouts, in advance of the centre.

There was little fighting till toward noon, but I came close to that little, and a few bullets zinged through the air overhead as we advanced. Midway I came up to a farmhouse from which some hot firing had proceeded

British officer examining the occupants of a Boer farmhouse, from which shots had been fired on the English scouts.

shortly before. While I was getting some milk and cakes from the old vrouw several officers came riding up, and, collecting the women together, put them through an examination in regard to the firing. The house was searched after the women were told to surrender any arms or ammunition they had. A few cartridges were brought out, for they had been told "if we find a single cartridge we will burn the house over your heads." The horses in the stable and two handsome wagons were commandeered; then the offi-

cers and scouts rode on, leaving badly frightened Boer women where I had found smiling faces and hospitality an hour before. Later I rode on ahead of the scouts, feeling safe in the knowledge of the right and left flank attacks to be made, and early in the afternoon raced madly along a spruit with a dozen or so of scouts, while a heavy cannonading to the left showed that at last serious resistance

Charley Ross, the Canadian Scout, first man into Brandfort, reporting to General Pole-Carew, and showing him where the different safes were located, of which Ross had commandeered the keys.

of some kind had been encountered. As I reached the town an incessant pop-popping to the north from a kopje convinced me that the scouts were drawing fire, so I edged away from them and rode in alone. The Transvaal flag was still flying over the Red Cross hospital. A hearty American "Halloo, there!" greeted me, and I found myself face to face with Charley Ross, the Canadian scout,

second in command of Remington's "Tigers." He solemnly assured me that I was the first correspondent in Brandfort. After loudly boasting of the fact all afternoon and evening, I was confronted with the humiliating fact that Dr. Conan Doyle and two other correspondents had quietly watched my triumphal entry from a comfortable hotel piazza while sipping the whiskey and soda ordered ten minutes before. Ignorant of this, I left Ross and

Red Cross Hospital at Brandfort, taken before the arrival of the troops, while the flag of the Republic was still flying. A few minutes later it was taken down by order of a Major in the Imperial army.

galloped to the hospital. Several scouts were standing by, and I ordered one of them to pull down the Transvaal flag; I wanted it for a souvenir. To my disgust I learned it had already been appropriated by a Major somebody who had gotten there before me and had ordered the man to guard it until he returned; so I rode on to the Free State Hotel, and ordered rooms and a meal for myself and two other correspondents with whom I had been riding an hour earlier, and with whom I had agreed that the first man in should

engage accommodations for the other two. These gentlemen were the Hon. Robert Beresford, representing the Central News, and Mr. Burdett-Coutts, representing himself. I was unquestionably the first man to register at this hotel; but before we could get to bed, although already in possession of a room, Lord Roberts and his staff arrived,

Kaffirs, discovered by Charley Ross and the author looting clothing from the house of the Brandfort Landrost, who fled on the approach of the British. The Kaffirs were arrested and afterward released with a warning.

and several dukes and lords commandeered the best rooms, which "threw us out." Messrs. Coutts and Beresford found other quarters for the night,—the first on the floor of the dining-room, and the second on the floor of another room already occupied. I, the heroic first to register, having risked life and liberty to get there in time, had to sleep in my own blankets in the forage-room in the back yard,

cold and draughty as the veldt itself. A staff officer coming in rather late was equally unfortunate. Two things, however, recompensed me. The Duke of Westminster, richest peer of all England, in coming out of the lighted hall into the darkness of the front stoop collided with the improvised lavatory, consisting of a wicker chair and huge basin of very dirty water just abandoned by some other titled excellency. The result was a gloriously effective spill, from the débris of which some six feet of concentrated and irate British aristocracy rose in purple indignation, while I and another American, back in a dark corner, the only ones who saw anything funny in the incident, nearly strangled in the effort to suppress our merriment. Half a dozen colonels and brigadiers ran to the Duke's assistance; for the richest nobleman of all England to fall from his dignified altitude of six feet to kiss his mother earth midst a general mix-up of basin, chair and dirty water, was a serious affair. But the two American degenerates in the dark corner, as soon as it was safe to move, walked leisurely up the road for fifty yards or so; then one of them shied a stick at a cur dog, which ran yelping away, while the two said degenerates doubled up with laughter—at the dog, of course.

Three Burghers captured at Brandfort, one wearing khaki. All three still defiant.

The other source of compensation was suggested by my roommate, the belated staff officer. We both comman-

deered enough forage during the night to make our horses swell up like balloons by morning. This may be a bit exaggerated, yet my pony carried me back forty miles to Bloemfontein the next day without a stumble—a feat impossible to a horse that had not been well fed.

This advance toward Pretoria, as far as Brandfort, showed clearly that the Boers did not intend to make any serious resistance. "Bobs" had them on the run, and evidently would be able to keep them so. Somehow I felt like going back to Cape Town. I had enough money in hand to get me back to America, and thought that that was why I was going back. The "Daily Express" regular correspondent was taken sick, and I was offered his position,—ordinarily a brilliant opportunity that any sane man would jump at. I didn't feel for the job, but refused it. Strangely enough, it was the wisest thing to do, as subsequent events clearly proved. There was no more fighting of any consequence. The Boers had begun their long trek to the northward, and, with the exception of a few skirmishes, the evolutions of the opposing forces resolved themselves into mere retreat and pursuit.

CHAPTER XXX.

FAREWELL TO THE ARMY AND THE FREE STATE.

ABOUT ten o'clock on the morning of May 4th I started back for Bloemfontein, after shaking hands for the last time with the chief press Censor, Lord Stanley. Riding through the streets, I met many of my old friends. Out on the veldt the rest of the army was straggling in, with an occasional belated correspondent urging his weary outfit along, grumbling at this, that or the other cause of his being a day late in reaching Brandfort. Most of these were my friends, and each cost me from ten minutes to half an hour's time in mutual expressions of good-will and good-fellowship. I met and passed many contingents of troops whose officers had entertained me with everything from whiskey and soda to several days' hospitality. The whole distance of twenty-five miles back to the Glen was a continuous, long-drawn-out farewell to the Imperial army. Half way I met the foreign attachés riding along in a body. Captain Slocum, of the U. S. army, was among them, and shouted after me, as we parted, "Give my best love to all the Yanks, whenever and wherever you meet them." Finally the last lumbering transport bringing up the rear creaked wearily out of sight, and I rode on over the delightfully green and fresh veldt, so charmingly free from the odorous carcasses and loathsome vultures which distinguished the Modder River treks—a welcome proof of the highly improved condition of the Imperial transport service.

My old instinct for breaking new trails soon led me to deviate from the beaten tracks, and to ride on toward a

distant farm in line with the big kopjes behind Bloemfontein, which loomed up faintly twenty miles away. I kept going steadily all day, so nightfall found me weary and hungry, as well as tormented with excruciating pains in the back and neck. Still half an hour out from the city, I arrived at the centre building of a succession of rambling outhouses and barns belonging to a typical Boer farm. A dusky figure stood in the road ahead of me. It was a soldier on guard, protecting the property against marauders.

The Canadian Scout Charley Ross in consultation with a staff-officer at Brandfort.

At my request he called a Kaffir servant, whom I despatched into the maze of buildings in search of his master. Soon an old, long white-haired, and equally white-bearded, burgher came out. I told him in a few words that I was sick, and craved his hospitality for a few hours before continuing my journey. The old man helped me off my horse, sent it off to the stable with the "boy," took me into the house, and put me to bed in his guest-chamber, where, on a feather-bed, between clean white sheets, I soon fell asleep, while the old man sat by the bed talking to me like a father

whose boy has come home after a long journey. Then he left me, coming back after several hours to tell me, as I awoke and roused myself to go on to town, that I had better stay until morning and rest. After breakfast I left this old homestead, my host accepting just five shillings, the regular price for the forage my horse had consumed. As for my own meals and accommodations, I had been his "guest," and seeing that he would have it that way, I was content. To him I had been an officer of the Queen's army,

The Brandfort Hotel, headquarters of Field Marshal Lord Roberts and Staff.

an enemy of his country; but, for all that, he had given his best to the stranger coming to his gates after nightfall.

Bloemfontein had already settled down into a half-sleepy condition again. A small army of occupation still hung about its outskirts, but the hotels and club were empty of the crowd of officers that had filled their halls and rooms a week before, and the few transports and khaki-clad occupants of the streets had the leisurely air of permanency—in short, the atmosphere was already that of the normal for the next year or so, until peace and loyalty to the

Queen might be assured and all troops could be withdrawn. That evening I attended a bazar and oyster supper in the town hall, for the benefit of the Boer prisoners at St. Helena. Few officers attended, and none of the pro-British townspeople, but the Boer families came out in force; and as I sat at a little fairy lamp-lighted table talking to some of the young ladies, whose every tone vibrated with sorrow for the loss of their country's independence,—as I looked into the blue eyes of some of these belles of the Free State, —I found myself wondering whether, perhaps, it would not be better to seek and find a way to remain for all time; to become one of them, and live out my years in an effort to successfully fit myself into the machinery of reconstruction. Then my harsher Northern philosophy asserted itself; I reflected that the Free State must be of necessity the Poland of South Africa; that sighs, and even tears of sympathy, would doubtless be expended in great quantity to no avail; so in a few confidential conversations I reminded my stricken friends that "Though the mills of the gods grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding fine."

The Free State is conquered for the time being, as is also the Transvaal. Some of their people have resigned themselves to the inevitable. Others are still out on the veldt in arms, bound by strange oaths to fight to the bitter end till death. Putting aside my prejudices and sympathies, I could not help seeing plainly that the war had but given new birth and strength to the cause of Afrikanderdom; which, though it may slumber for many years, yet sooner or later will again burst forth; and a future United States of South Africa is as inevitable as it is that, in the natural course of events, all children, on their approaching maturity, must and will become self-supporting and independent. With all its greatness, the British Empire cannot hope to rule forever either its natural or adopted children.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CONVERSION OF "LOOT" INTO LITERARY CAPITAL.

FOR the twelfth time I crossed, by train, the Karroo Desert, now cool and delightful, where five months before it had been a lurid hell of dust and aridness. At Cape Town I soon found the man who was to make my lantern-slides, and on hunting up the theatrical manager mentioned in an earlier chapter I learned that he had abandoned the lecture scheme, owing to a recent fiasco, perpetrated by another correspondent, which had "queered" the business for the time. However, I determined to "buck the tiger" myself and make my own arrangements, intending to start at Graham's Town, afterward lecture at Port Elizabeth, and then either go back to England at once, to lecture there during the siege of Pretoria, which all supposed would be in progress, or else return to the front and join Lord Roberts before he reached Johannesburg. I engaged quiet boarding-rooms with a private family while waiting the five days it would take to get out my "slides." Incidentally I called on Mr. Robinson, the "Daily Express" manager at the Mount Nelson Hotel, which was within a stone's throw of my new home. I explained to him my reasons for not waiting to receive his answer to Hodgett's proposal to take me along to Pretoria for the "Express." I found Mr. Robinson a delightful man to talk to—largely, I presume, because he was a good listener to my tales and able to enjoy American humor, and also sufficiently my superior in mental calibre to make my effort to reach and remain on his plane exhilarating and pleasur-

able. The climax of this enjoyment was reached when he asked me to write up one of my tales in the shape of a story for the "Express;" and when, next day, I handed him the copy, and received in exchange a check for a sum expressed in guineas which quite agreed with my own appreciation of myself, my admiration for Mr. Robinson reached the stage of personal devotion.

Incidentally, while talking over "my plans" I mentioned

The Author waiting for Prince Francis of Teck, Commander of the Remount Yards, at Bloemfontein, to pose for a few photographs.

the fact that I regretted I had not time or money enough to go up the east coast to Delagoa Bay, from there into the Transvaal, and see the remainder of the war from the Boer side. The idea struck him as odd, since he did not realize that as an American it was my privilege to do this. When I explained the situation to him, he asked me if I would go on to Pretoria in that way for the "Express." Then followed negotiations, for my keen nose scented a

"new deal." The cable to London was brought into requisition; and two days later, when the reply arrived, "Rush Unger on to Pretoria," we came to terms that for the next three months made me the best paid war correspondent in South Africa. The lecture scheme was abandoned, although the slides had been delivered and paid for. Then I made my last and thirteenth trip across the Karroo, reaching Graham's Town, where I refunded the loan of two pounds I had received several months earlier from Mr. Grocott, and spent a delightful evening at his home, telling him of some of my experiences, for what man is he that does not enjoy a good listener?

Prince Francis receives news of a fresh capture of Boer ponies.

The conversation, written up, which really secured me my position with the "Express," was an imaginative yet truly descriptive sketch which I think worth while reproducing. It was published in the "Express" on June 6, 1900, and was as follows:

"LOOT."

"And if any man shall steal a chicken, he shall hang; that the sin of looting may pass away." So said the great Field Marshal, and—we who write—all echoed his words and said, "Yea, it is just."

Two days later, while riding to Paardeburg, I stopped to off-saddle my horse at a deserted farm. While he quietly grazed in the garden I made an investigation of the interior of the house. Truly, as Kipling has said, "It looked as though whirlwinds had met there to wrestle." Broken

furniture, crockery, pictures, bric-a-brac of all kinds, clothing, broken glass—everything destroyed—a pitiable scene of desolation. In a corner, with its legs twisted out of shape, lay a little tin horse, a child's toy, the paint cracked and the head bent back to the tail. Even this trifle had seemed deserving of the attention of some stalwart trooper. I was told that 17,000 regulars passed by this place, leaving it untouched, and then a few regiments of irregular horse swooped down and did the work. "Outrageous!" I mused meditatively, at the same time unconsciously crunch-

An unruly mare demands Prince Francis' attention. The Prince is the most expert horseman in the British army, and exercises a wonderful control over animals.

ing an unbroken piece of glass under my heel. Then I picked up a tattered Bible, mechanically tearing out a few more leaves. Then I saw a table in so advanced a stage of dissolution that one good kick would completely smash those three legs, leaving the fourth to hold one corner in the air, that men looking in might see that nothing good remained. The kick was delivered, the three legs gave way; some books and dishes slid to the floor. One corner remained elevated in the air, emphasizing the work of destruction I had completed. Suddenly the thought struck me that I, too, was a vandal, and, thoroughly

ashamed, I hurriedly went out, up-saddled and galloped off.

I comforted myself with the thought that the thing was contagious, and firmly resolved to be more cautious in future, that I might sin no more. Two days later my saddle-girth broke. A neighbor's lay near by. It was but the work of a moment to substitute the good girth for my useless one, and as I rode away I was conscious of a tingling thrill of satisfaction at having successfully acquired something without having given an equivalent value in exchange. Surprised at the absence of shame, I yet realized on what an awful danger I was bordering.

Had I but paused then I might have returned to virtuous ways; but, alas! instead, I went from bad to worse.

I visited an outpost which had had a sharp skirmish with the enemy near Koodoosrand Drift, driving them off and leaving a quantity of stores behind. An account of stock had not yet been taken when I arrived; so I quietly exchanged my old saddle for a new one, picked up a new bridle and saddle-cloth; also a much needed pair of saddlebags. I boldly rode off with my loot, feeling that I had taken an irrevocable step, and that the first stage of my degradation was complete. From that time on I allowed no unnecessary qualms of conscience to interfere with my acquisition of things. True, I respected and feared the Provost Marshal; but that was only to the extent of avoiding his part of the camp when returning with a conspicuously large bag of "forage," or with a pair of very indignant old lady chickens vigorously protesting from the depths of my saddlebags. Only once, some weeks later, did I hesitate in my downward career, and that was when I started to ride into camp on a magnificent black stallion. I wisely changed my mind and took the unbranded mare instead, and as a reward for my discretion rode the gallant little beast for

many weeks thereafter unchallenged as to the propriety of my ownership.

The finishing touches were put to my education in the art of looting at Poplar Grove. While the enemy was in full flight, with the Imperial forces hotly pursuing, I met another friend, who inquired if I "had been in any of the deserted laagers yet?" I answered, "No;" and when he suggested "I saw a lot of good mackintoshes up on the hill a while ago," I galloped off after him. We were joined

The Prince subdues with one hand the unruly mare which for half an hour had dragged half a dozen men about the yards.

by a third vandal, and together we three went through half a dozen of the abandoned outpost laagers. The camp had been occupied a long time, and had been evacuated hurriedly. We found half-prepared food on smoking fires; we picked up a blanket here, there a pair of saddle-wallets, then some new straps; and so on we rolled, putting the proverbial stone to shame.

When we returned to camp we looked like a caravan of Eastern merchants. Two huge tin pails swung across each saddle filled with a *potpourri* of camp luxuries gleaned

from the losses of a hundred burghers; new mackintoshes rolled up on the front of our saddles; two waterproof blankets apiece; while my particular loot included a twelve-bladed clasp knife and a toilet and shaving set in a leather case, "imported from Germany." After that I could twist a chicken's neck, and half an hour later shamelessly invite a staff officer to dinner. I could feed my horse on two bundles of forage, while colonels turned their ponies out on the veldt.

I was found eating fresh eggs and wheat bread and drinking quarts of fresh milk, while the rest of the army were on half rations of biscuit and "bully beef." I rode a new horse every three days, and in every skirmish earned the admiration of the rank and file and the envy of my contemporaries by the fearless way in which I followed the scouts, and advanced with the firing-line over laagte, nek and kopje into the enemy's laager; always first in—to loot. Yes, looting is very wrong, no doubt; but, as one who knows, next to the fierce joy of fighting, that of satisfying the primeval instinct of robber man is the strongest pleasure which war affords. Add the promise of plunder to the certainty of a fight, and you increase by tenfold the efficiency of any army in the world.

Napoleon thoroughly understood this principle in human nature, and, though it may be truly said, "He carried the art of war back five hundred years to the Middle Ages," yet was there ever so devoted and energetic a body of men as those fearless legions of France who warred for twenty years across the wrinkled face of tortured Europe? No, if war be right in any case, then be consistent and let the boys loot. A campaign cannot be run like a Sunday-school, nor is going into battle like a tea party. Since war brings to the surface all of man's strongest passions, let Field Marshals realize the folly of trying to utilize one only while suppressing the rest.

Yes, undoubtedly the lust for fighting is one of man's strongest passions, and following close behind is his love of looting. The two go together and are inseparable. "War should support war." "To the victor belong the spoils." So, if for policy or principle it be wise to let man murder, then, for his individual and private gratification, why not let him be also a thief?

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE LAND OF DELAY, THE CITY OF TO-MORROW, AND THE HOUSE OF NEXT MONTH.

FROM Graham's Town I went on to Port Elizabeth, there to catch the steamer up the east coast to Durban, where a French steamer, due to leave for Delagoa Bay the day after my arrival, was to end my voyaging for another period of weeks, months, or maybe longer. Before leaving Graham's Town a rumor spread through the streets that Mafeking had been relieved, and the extras issued as the train steamed out confirmed the report, and sent hundreds of flags sliding up as many flagstaffs and strings of bunting crossing the streets, and before the train wound out of sight beyond the hills Graham's Town was going through a delirium of rejoicings. At the larger stations along the line crowds of school-children with flags in hand cheered and hurrahed as the train, the daily mail, passed by. Port Elizabeth was reached at night, and had already had its first spasm. The evening was a "wide-open" one, with bands and processions and thousands of people thronging the streets. The Boer element kept indoors, and the few who ventured out looked as depressed and sombre as the black clothing nearly all of them wore.

This was Saturday. My steamer was not due until Tuesday. Sunday was appropriately quiet, and I wrote letters, while Port Elizabeth got ready for a monstrous celebration on Monday. The speeches, processions, hilarity and general festivity of that day wore away. Between time I wrote

many letters, bought a few essentials, and by Tuesday afternoon was snugly stowed away on the steamship *Dunvegan Castle*, occupying the best stateroom, on my way to Durban.

The steamer stopped a day at East London, but I did not go ashore. Instead, I sat on deck, smoked, and looked at the sandy and rocky shore where I had bathed during

Mafeking Day. Procession through the main street of Port Elizabeth. The Town Hall in the background.

my runs down to the coast from Sterkstrom. It was here that I had met Consul Hay on his way to Pretoria, and I pictured his surprise when I should walk in on him weeks, or maybe months, before the arrival of Lord Roberts and his army. I saw the tug come out with new passengers, take off visitors to the shore, and remembered how seasick I had been doing the same thing a few months before, and congratulated myself anew on the reversed order of things,

with my present prosperity assured, and smoked another cigar. I made few friends on the boat, for the time was too short, and my own thoughts and imaginings were sufficient company for me. The voyage was smooth, and I was spared the agony of sea-sickness. In every way I felt lucky; the gods were smiling on me, and my star was in the ascendant. I was quite ready to undertake anything that might present itself, and felt that all the world, seen and unseen, was ready to stand by and aid me in every effort.

The dream was short, but sweet. I was soon to learn anew that what I would get I would have to fight for, and fight good and hard, too.

On the morning of the 25th I reached Durban and went to a hotel, where I found that the French boat had not yet arrived. I saw the agent and bought my ticket for Lorenzo Marquez. When I had paid over the money he told me that I would have to see the English commandant and get permission to leave, and that it was useless to attempt to get away without doing so, as no one was allowed to go aboard the tugboat unless on the commandant's list. I assumed that, in my case, this would be merely a matter of formality, and so I took a "ricksha" and called on the commandant. He was in his office, but I was turned over to his assistant. I told him I had bought my ticket for Delagoa Bay, and that I understood a pass was required, in order to insure my departure without delay.

"Precisely," was his reply; and then followed a series of questions by which he discovered that I was an American war correspondent, in possession of a full war license from Lord Roberts, and that I had been with the army in the Free State for some months past; also, that my intention was to proceed as quickly as possible into the enemy's country *via* the Portuguese Territory. When he had

reached thus far he quietly closed the book in which he had been making a few notes of my remarks and said, "I am sorry to tell you we cannot allow you to proceed farther. We have already had to refuse several other correspondents, and one is still here, having waited six weeks for permission to go on."

"But I am an American citizen," I replied, "and you have no authority to detain me; I must demand my rights, for it is of the utmost importance that I reach Pretoria as early as possible." The Major turned to the commandant and stated my case. The reply was, "Certainly not; he cannot go." I expostulated further; but my only satisfaction was a promise to wire to the General commanding in Natal. Then I left the office.

The gentlemen had been exquisitely polite, but Gibraltar itself did not seem more inexorably immovable than their decision. Hastily getting into another ricksha, I directed the boy to take me to the American Consul's office. I found Mr. Rennie in and very busy, but not too much so to listen to my story and promise to see the commandant himself. He asked me to call again the next day, when he assured me it would be "all right."

There was no help for it. I was "up against it," and had to wait. Meanwhile Lord Roberts had left Kronstad and was nearing the Vaal. My steamer would not leave for four days, which was in itself a most exasperating delay; but in the face of this new obstacle it was rather fortunate, for the next steamer would be a month later, and of course entirely useless to me.

My visit to the Consul the following morning was far from satisfactory. He had not yet seen the commandant, but said, "If he gives me any trouble I shall wire to the Governor at Cape Town, and then it will be all right." A few hours later I saw him again, when he told me that the

commandant would have allowed me to pass had I not told him that I was a correspondent. However, he would see him again, and promised me better news the next day. Then I quietly went to the telegraph office and wired to Colonel Stowe, the American Consul at Cape Town: "Authorities here object to further progress." This was what Colonel Stowe had advised me to do if there was any trouble, and he had promised me he would see the Governor himself in such an event.

Elizabeth Monument on hill above Port Elizabeth, Cape Colony, decorated during Mafeking Day Celebrations.

But, alas! This was late on Friday, and the Colonel would not be at his office on Saturday, which would result in his interview with the Governor in my behalf being delayed until Monday—after my steamer had left. Clearly, something had to be done. Saturday morning I had another interview with the Consul, and still nothing had been done. Then my mind was made up. I had still one trump card to play, and, disagreeable as might be the result, it had to be played. Going back to the hotel I got my papers, and then called for the last time on the com-

mandant. As I entered the office a shadow of annoyance passed over his face.

"The American Consul has been here," he said, "and as I have not yet heard from the General, my answer to him was the same as to you. Nothing can be done till he replies."

"Colonel," I said, "I want to thank you for your forbearance with my persistency, and also to say that I have never been more courteously treated by English officers than I have been by you, and I have received many favors from their hands, which makes that remark mean something. I sincerely hope that, with the exception of a difference of opinion between us, our relations will continue to be as pleasant; but as a mere matter of form I must ask you to look at this," and I spread out my United States passport on the table before him.

"Yes, I know your papers are all right," he said; and then, looking at the outstretched wings of our American eagle at the top of my passport, he added, in a lower voice, "and a grand old bird this emblem of freedom is, too;" then folding the paper and handing it back to me; "but I cannot allow you to go to Delagoa Bay;" closing with the crushing words, "for a correspondent to go from one side of a war to the other is not the usual thing. You are an accredited correspondent attached to our army, have had the status of an officer, and your nationality must stand aside."

I might have accepted this as final had he not made use of those fatal words, "not the usual thing;" words which to an Englishman might have been final, but which for an American have no meaning except procrastination, with that magic phrase as an excuse and justification. No; go I would, and that in spite of all the red tape in the United Kingdom; so, dropping the mask of affable diplomacy

which I had been careful to wear up to this time, I said gravely, looking the commandant straight in the eyes, "Do what you will with the accredited correspondent, but be careful not to lay hands upon a citizen of the United States. Good afternoon, gentlemen; I shall go aboard my steamer Monday morning at ten o'clock."

As I left the office I came face to face with the American Consul again. I told him what I had just done, and added, "My personal relations with the officers of the English army for the past six months have been so agreeable that I don't want at the moment of my leaving it, perhaps forever, to have anything unpleasant to mar the memory of my association with them; but if you see fit to see the commandant again, you can tell him for me that if he wants to detain me on Monday he must send a squad of men down to the wharves to prevent it; nothing less will do, for I will resist, and they will be compelled to carry me off bodily; and if that should happen, I promise you personally that within the month there will be at least fifty influential pro-Boer American newspapers going into hysterics over the 'Latest British Outrage upon an American Citizen.'"

I went back to my hotel and dismissed the matter from my mind. Sunday I spent writing letters and resting. Monday morning I loaded up my luggage on a ricksha and went down to the wharf. At ten o'clock I went on the tug. As I walked up the gang plank an officer asked for my name, and as he looked at a paper held in his hands I also ran my eye down the list, and saw a little red check beside my name, which meant "all right." Then he ordered a Tommy to help me with my luggage, and, as I desired, my last touch with British officialdom in South Africa was to receive an additional favor, and add still greater weight to the monumental amount of obligations I am under to that splendid body of men.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LAND OF THE MILREIS.

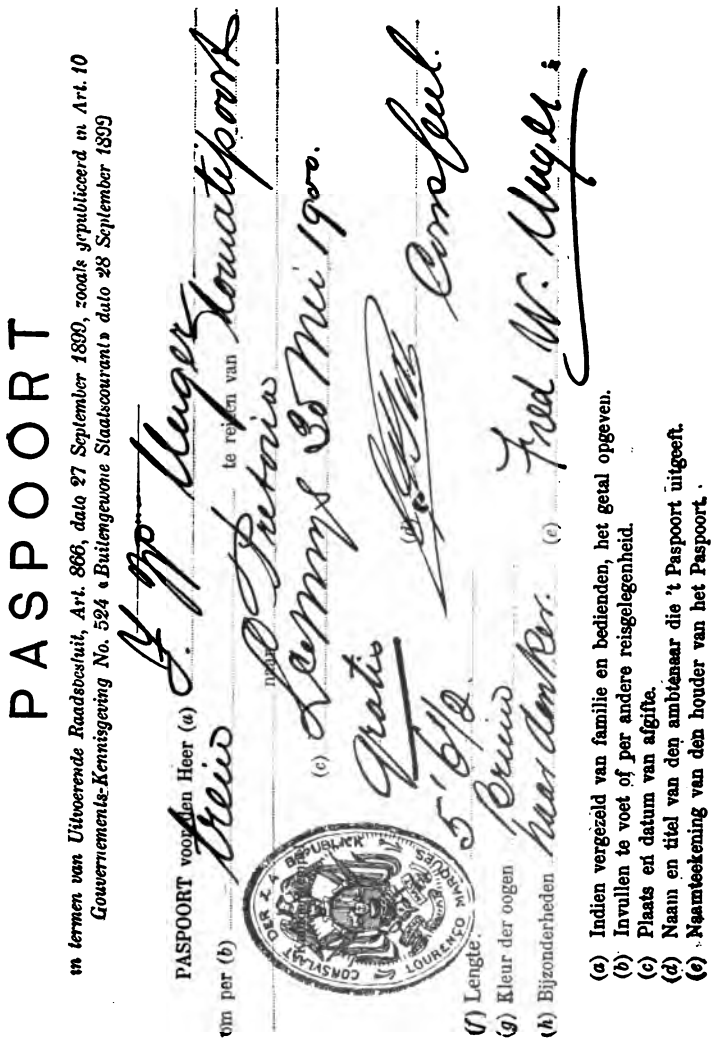
IT was only a twenty-four-hour run from Durban to Delagoa Bay, and the *Djemmna* arrived there early in the morning. The first thing I heard was the news that Lord Roberts had taken Johannesburg. That miserable four days' delay at Durban had robbed me of the coup of getting into the city before the Imperial army. However, Pretoria was still left, and perhaps I could manage to get there.

A small fleet of sailboats clustered about the sides of the steamer, manned by undersized, swarthy, dirty-looking Portuguese and natives. Mr. Aamsden, an American photographer who was travelling with me, and I got our twenty-two pieces of baggage on one of these boats and were rowed ashore, where a lot of blacks took our effects and started in a long procession toward the custom-house. This service cost us something almost fabulous, running into the thousands—of milreis, the current coin, equal in value to about one-tenth of a cent. There was no trouble at the custom-house until the package containing my saddle was opened. This was promptly confiscated as being "contraband of war." I looked regretfully at the pile of ten thousand cases of American tinned beef destined for the Transvaal which was also stored there as contraband, and then a mild attack of determination seized me not to lose my saddle, contraband or no contraband.

Up to this time the examination had been conducted without the aid of an interpreter. I went outside, along

the dock, and after speaking to half a dozen men found one who could understand English, and through him succeeded in informing the customs officials that I did not wish to take the bulk of my baggage into the country at all, but would prefer to leave it with them in bond. No objection was made, and I was given a form of paper with heaven only knows what scrawled on it, and some thousands more milreis were demanded. I began to feel like a millionaire; but when, later in the day, a cabman charged me two thousand five hundred more (about $2.50) for driving half a mile, I began to believe that I must be a very exalted personage in the eyes of this community, every member of which seemed to be living on extortionate fees.

After leaving the custom-house our procession of natives, with the baggage considerably reduced in number of pieces, started through the streets of the city of Lorenzo Marquez, arriving, after many turnings and twistings, at a hotel, where we ordered breakfast. We learned that there would be a train leaving for Pretoria that evening; also that considerable red tape would be required before we could come into possession of the necessary passports; so after breakfast we started up the long hill at the back of the town to the American Consulate, the usual Mecca of the American citizen abroad when in perplexity of any kind. Mr. Hollis received us with a somewhat bored air, viséd our passports, and in an absent-minded sort of way charged us five thousand milreis for putting the seal of the United States over his signature. Then he wrote a note of introduction for us to the Transvaal Consul, and gave us the necessary directions as to how to proceed. Near the custom-house we found the Transvaal Consulate, where a beery-faced Dutch secretary took our American passports and letters of introduction, telling us to come back in about an hour.



PASPOORT

in termen van Uitvoerende Raadsbesluit, Art. 866, dato 27 September 1899, zooals gepubliceerd in Art. 10 Gouvernements-Kennisgeving No. 524 «Buitengewone Staatscourant» dato 28 September 1899

PASPOORT voor den Heer (a) J. Wm. Unger

om per (b) Treis te reizen van Louatipoort

naar Pretoria

(c) Lemmys 30 Mei 1900.

Gratis

(d) Consul.

(f) Lengte 5' 6 1/2

(g) Kleur der oogen Bruin

(h) Bijzonderheden Haar donker.

(e) Fred W. Unger

(a) Indien vergezeld van familie en bedienden, het getal opgeven.
(b) Invullen te voet of per andere reisgelegenheid.
(c) Plaats en datum van afgifte.
(d) Naam en titel van den ambtenaar die 't Paspoort uitgeeft.
(e) Naamteekening van den houder van het Paspoort.

First Transvaal Passport, including railway transportation to Pretoria, issued to the author by Consul Potts at Lorenzo Marquez.

By this time it was nearly noon and we were hungry again, and so we had lunch at a restaurant in the little park or public square near by. Then we went back to the Consulate, where the beery-faced clerk presented us each with a Transvaal passport and a railway pass to Pretoria. He also returned our American passports, which we then took to the Prefecture of Police, where, after payment of more thousands of milreis, we received a "Salvo Conducto," which means a certificate that, since our arrival in Lorenzo Marquez, to the exact knowledge of the police we had not committed any crime. With this additional evidence of our upright character we then proceeded to the Governor's office, where our collection of papers was looked over, and we were requested to call again at four o'clock. We were half an hour late in getting back, and were reprimanded for the delinquency; then an official escorted us through many dark corridors into a very handsome and pretentious room. A small table stood beside the window; a closed door faced us. The official asked us to sign our names in a book on the table; then, with our papers in his hand, he vanished through the door, closing it behind him. Instinct told us he was in the awful presence of the Governor, whose august face we wondered if we were to see. But it was not to be. The official returned, handed us the papers, enriched by the addition of a Portuguese passport, and then calmly collected the staggering fee of ten thousand milreis. That Governor was no slouch; he understood his business as well as a New York police captain.

We paid the ten thousand and hurried back to the hotel, where we learned that the train for Pretoria would not start until the following morning. This gave us some additional time, and we spent the evening on the plaza, incidentally making a visit to the *Djemmna* to see off some new-

made friends who were sailing the next day. Before bedtime Mr. Aamsden and I took a part of our baggage to the Consulate, and left it there in charge of Mr. Hollis. I found that a cablegram from Mr. Robinson at Cape Town had come for me, asking me to confer with a certain man at Lorenzo Marquez who was the local agent for the "Express." On inquiry, I found he was known to be an English spy, so I quickly realized that I would have

Boer girl, Red Cross nurse at Waterval Oonder.

to ignore him entirely. From the time of my arrival in Lorenzo Marquez until we steamed out of it the next morning at six o'clock we were under the constant surveillance of spies of three governments—England, Portugal and the Transvaal. I suppose, at times, fully a dozen men were watching us closely, and, as a result, we felt duly important.

It was with a sigh of relief that we saw the last of the city and realized that we really were out of it and on our

way to Pretoria at last. What that day had cost us we could not figure up accurately from memory afterward, and we had not taken any notes. But it could not have been less than fifty thousand milreis, and we made proportionate note of the item in our expense-books.

Both the American and Portuguese authorities had required of us our affirmation that we were not going into the Transvaal to fight against England. I posed as the representative of an American newspaper, saying nothing of my London engagement, and Mr. Aamsden was my assistant and photographer; hence the courtesy of the railroad passes. The beery-faced Dutch clerk was the only official we had met who had not charged us a single milreis.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

BY TRAIN TO PRETORIA.

LEAVING Lorenzo Marquez, the train seems to travel more swiftly than is the custom in any other part of South Africa. The view is not so extended as in the Karroo. Instead of broad, flat veldt, bordered with faint blue ridges of the inevitable kopjes in the distance, the road runs through a thick bush country, which it is impossible for the eye to penetrate more than fifty yards. All objects presented to the sight fall behind so much more quickly than the Karroo kopjes, ten to twenty miles distant, that the illusion of rapid travelling is complete; in fact, however, we were going up a long grade, and hardly as fast as one of the same percentage would have been ascended on the Cape government railways.

Looking from the window, I noticed that the soil was "mixed," being both clay and sand. The grass was thick and high, with great black patches here and there, where a spark from a passing locomotive had fired it. The trees were not as tropical of aspect as I had expected; they were of about the size and shape of apple trees, and scattered in a manner suggesting a large orchard—so different from the treeless veldts of the Free State. In occasional and irregular acres the natives had planted some corn. They call it "mealies," the regular South African name for it; foreign travellers refer to it as "maise," and recall my school-boy geography with its lists of "agricultural products;" and at last, in South Africa, I learned what maize really was; maize or mealy, it was the same corn that grew at home in

America, and my heart warmed toward the simple savages who had planted it so close to the orchard-like clumps of trees, that carried me, as I saw it, back across continents and seas to the beautiful farms of Pennsylvania. To one fresh from the States, perhaps no such suggestion would be possible; but to me, after soaking for half a year on the veldt, the slighest suggestion of home scenes was more than sufficient to recall the rest.

As we travelled on we got into a more open country. The trees were more scattered, and between them were wide stretches of waving green, with an occasional solitary palm tree as a reminder that at least the country was "subtropical."

Then the muddy Koomaatti River found its way to the side of the railway embankment, dodging in and out among the trees. On the other side extended a bush-covered range of hills, not "kopjes," behind which we were told could be found plenty of koodoo, springbok, and other larger game. The lions had all been killed off years before, and now one must travel far beyond the beaten paths of traffic to reach their haunts, farther north and west.

It was winter, though June, and so while the trees were still green, the grass was dead and dried up. The air was neither hot nor cold; the climate was delightful, although said to be full of fevers of no particular name but of deadly power.

Later on, the veldt folded itself up on both sides of the road, forming an immense canyon. At one side now flowed the Crocodile River, said to be full of the silurian monsters and their families; and, looking down the steep banks into many mysterious green pools, I found no difficulty in believing it to be true. The only animals I saw were a troop of baboons scampering across the tracks ahead of the engine as it rounded a curve. They had melons and other fruit

in their paws, and with much jabbering disappeared among the rocks up the sides of the canyon.

For about thirty miles the train followed the river through that grand gorge, the mineral colors of the natural rocks, with their towering peaks outlined against the blue sky, blending with the fresh greens of a luxurious vegetation and the mysterious dark and silent hues of the crocodile pools below, varied by snow-white cascades and waterfalls all mixed in brilliant confusion, and forming a scene of surpassing beauty clearly destined to become yet another "special point of interest" for future generations of patiently-suffering Cook tourists.

Before noon we reached Koomaatiport and the Transvaal border, where our passports and baggage were examined, and even our private letters were read. Then hands felt all over our bodies, under coats and vests, and patted pockets in search of revolvers. I was in a state of extreme anxiety when my portfolio was rummaged, for it contained letters from British officials and dozens of compromising papers, any one of which would have been sufficient to deny me the coveted entrance to Boerdom. But to my relief, and also to my disgust, the officials seemed more interested in certain private letters in feminine handwriting, over which they chuckled considerably, patted me on the back good-naturedly, and chalked crosses on my shoe-tips and baggage as an indication that we were "all right," for verily all the world loves "a"—"but that is another story," as Kipling says. All this we silently submitted to, for it was the necessary price of admission into the land of the burghers. Then the train pulled off again over more miles of rock, river, veldt and bush, and after awhile evening came, and darkness at five-thirty. After a few more hours' running the train stopped at a station where there were many tracks and houses off in the dark-

ness, sparkling dim lights like so many yellow stars on the ground, and we learned that we would go no farther that night, for recent dynamite attempts along the line had made night-running unwise. Thus I suffered another vexatious twelve-hour delay in my journey toward Pretoria, while Lord Roberts was, goodness only knows where, between there and Johannesburg.

After a cold, wretched night, sleeping in the car in our overcoats, we crawled out in the frosty air to have a miserable breakfast at the station restaurant. When this agony was over I went out on the platform to smoke. A train from Pretoria pulled in. It had hardly stopped before a heavily-built gentleman, followed by a bull terrier, jumped off and ran off into the town. Although I had never seen the man before, I recognized him as Mr. Richard Harding Davis. In about twenty minutes he came back. I gave him my card, and he introduced me to his wife, who was with him. We had about five minutes' talk before my train went on, but it was sufficient for me to learn from Mr. Davis that Pretoria was still held by the Boers. He was on his way to Lorenzo Marquez to catch the German mail steamer which would leave there for Naples in a few days. The train was crowded with refugees, principally Hollanders, women and children, and their compartments were overflowing with bundles of baggage, showing that they had left hastily, taking only their more valuable possessions. On the other hand, my own train was filled with armed men, all bent on reaching Pretoria in time to take part in its defence against the British.

This station was Waterval Onder, meaning below the waterfalls. As our train left, it began to ascend a heavy grade with many curves, which enabled me to see that between the tracks ran a heavy cogged rail, and an extra engine in front and one at the back were pushing the train.

This grade ascended for about fifteen hundred feet along the side of an immense gorge, at the bottom of which a small stream was flowing. A bend in the sides of the canyon hid the waterfall from view. Then the train ran out into the open again, and I found myself on the level of an immense plateau, where I was back in the veldt again, as I had known its treeless wastes in the Free State. Ten minutes more brought us to another station known as Waterval Boven, or above the waterfalls. Farther on we passed a station where there were a great many tents and

Burghers waiting at railway station for daily train on which to hasten to rejoin their commandoes for the defence of Pretoria.

carts, more side tracks and hundreds of cars. A number of handsomely uniformed officers were standing about the station. This was Machadodorp; but there was no one to tell us that the Government had moved here from Pretoria a few days before, and that the brilliant uniforms belonged to foreign attachés; for the other men in our compartment had been singularly uncommunicative, and we were unable to speak their language. Some of them could speak English well enough, but our inability to converse in Dutch made us objects of suspicion. Then, too, we did not make

any effort to draw them out, for our only object was to get into Pretoria before Lord Roberts. After that, the deluge —of khaki or anything else, it mattered not.

As we neared Middleburg, the largest town on the line, each station began to contribute half-dozen or more burghers returning to rejoin their commandoes at the front. We understood from their talk that a determined defence of the capital was to be made, and that every available man had been called out. Their clothes were the usual greys and browns of everyday wear, with an occasional rusty black garment thrown in. I noticed that in greeting each other they always shook hands, even when apparent strangers to one another. The common cause made of them a common brotherhood. When addressing the women among them, hats were always raised respectfully. When the women gave their last farewells to the burghers there was a conspicuous absence of scenes—no weepings or outcries, only a quiet "good-by," an occasional embrace and kiss, and a final wave of the hand, an atmosphere of respectful silence being the only indication of the deeper feelings underneath.

At some places there was an apparent reluctance on the part of some of the men to go to the front. At such times several of the older burghers got off and harangued the crowd, trying to shame the fellows into joining. They generally succeeded, but force was never used. Clearly it was optional with the individual Boers whether they should fight or stay at home. Usually about twenty warriors were gathered up at each stop; many were white-haired men of at least threescore-and-ten; others were fourteen-year-old youngsters; but all armed with Mausers and heavily-loaded down with ammunition. Open trucks behind the carriages carried their ponies, with which every man was provided. At one station, as the train was about to move on, a cloud

of dust in the distance across the veldt developed into two horsemen riding like mad for the train, which waited until they arrived. They galloped up, a dozen burghers raised the plank to the truck, the horses were led on, their owners jumped into the carriage, and the train steamed on. These men had needed no urging; they were determined to fight to the end, having heard encouraging news. The reports were that General French had lost five thousand men north of Johannesburg, that De Wet had cut off the railway behind Lord Roberts and was coming on with twelve thousand Free Staters, who had risen again on his appearance. Other reports were that French had been killed, and that the British were retiring southward. By the time we were near Pretoria the train was filled with soldiers, all armed and provided with fresh horses on the trucks behind, and ready to take the field at once.

We reached the city after dark, and found that even the tram-car and cab-horses had been commandeered, so we were compelled to leave our baggage at the station, apparently a risky thing to do, and tramp a long, weary mile in the darkness to the Grand Hotel, which we had been told was the best. The streets were quiet and but few men were seen; even the hotel seemed deserted. Information of any kind was not to be had; nobody knew anything, and so, after a cold supper, we turned in for the night in a very anxious and uncertain frame of mind.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN THE SHADOW OF SURRENDER.

BUT the quiet of the evening and night gave way to intense activity with the coming of morning. Early I looked out from my window across the market square. On one side stood the newly finished but as yet unused Palace of Justice. A commando of about thirty mounted burghers, ranging in age from thirteen to seventy, were drawn up in line facing the government building on the other side of the square. With their heads bared they sang several hymn-like airs, and then after a short prayer and an address by their leader they rode off on some expedition.

All the while small parties of from two to half a dozen mounted men were galloping into and from the streets meeting at the square. At no time were there more than a hundred men in view, but several thousand must have passed within sight during the morning. While Mr. Aamsden and I were standing in front of the hotel after breakfast, undecided as to what to do next, and still in dense ignorance of affairs, I accidentally overheard Colonel Blake's name mentioned in a rich brogue. Turning to the speaker, I asked him if he was a member of the Irish Brigade. He answered,

"Yes, Oi am."

"Well," I continued, "where is the Colonel?"

"Insoide, gettin' his grub," was the answer. I went back to the dining-hall and asked a waiter to point out Colonel Blake to me. There he was, sitting at the table

we had just left. I walked over and introduced myself to him as an American war correspondent.

A more different individual than the hard-faced swashbuckler I had expected to meet would be hard to find. His face was extremely refined in its expression, his features were strong and regular, his beard square and curly, his forehead bald, and his hair long and also curly; threads of grey streaked both beard and hair. He looked me squarely

The Market Square, Pretoria, showing granite pedestal erected for the reception of a Bronze Statue of President Krüger.

in the eye, out of deep, light-blue eyes, in a manner that made me admire him at once. His greeting was cordial in the extreme, and he at once introduced me to two of his men, rough enough looking customers, whom he was entertaining at breakfast. His manners were those of a thorough man of the world, equally at home in all societies, but he affects a carelessness of dress and rather boisterous manner, which makes him very popular. In the strong, classical regularity of his features, with his long curly hair and beard

and his brilliantly clear complexion, he did not look unlike a portrait of St. Peter by one of the old masters. He soon relieved me of my troubles by taking me to the government building to get new passports, which he said were necessary. The Boers seemed to idolize him, and as we walked across the square our progress was arrested every few steps by some one who wanted to shake his hand. Even the women pressed about him, and so wonderful was the man's memory that he called every man or woman by name, never hesitating a moment or making a single mistake.

Colonel Blake told me, as we entered the building, that the Government had been removed several days before to Machadodorp, but that he would find somebody who would fix my papers for me. In a stuffy office, crowded with men who were handling a lot of firearms, many of them of very old and antique pattern, we found an official who looked over the paper the Dutch Consul at Lorenzo Marquez had given me, and then wrote out a new passport (date, June 2, 1900), affixing the Government seal over his signature. It was not until some weeks later that I learned that in those few seconds I had become a member of the Irish Brigade myself, for my new passport attached me to that body or commando. A similar one was made out for Mr. Aamsden. The possession of my new passport gave me the unique position of holding full correspondent's passes from both Boer and British armies. I had unlimited privileges to go anywhere in the lines of either army, outposts and scouting lines being as free to me as Cape Town or Pretoria. It was in my power to go absolutely anywhere in South Africa,—a thing which neither "Bobs" nor Krüger could do, and I think I am safe in saying no one else could. However, the direct representatives of those two gentlemen had accorded me these unusual privileges, and it was now for me to see that I did not abuse them.

Another gentleman I met after dinner was Commandant Ben Viljoen. I only had a few words with him, but he impressed me as a man of considerable dignity, and quite the opposite of his reputation as it had filtered through the lines into the British camps. When the Imperial forces finally take Colonel Blake and Commandant Viljoen prisoners, they will be agreeably surprised to find two affable gentlemen in their hands, instead of the ruffianly characters the English press has made them appear.

There was a monotonous sameness in the appearance of the horsemen continually galloping about the streets. There seemed to be no apparent system; it looked as though it all was quite aimless. Nevertheless, the commandoes preparing to defend the city gradually formed themselves and took positions of vantage, described by one who had been outside as "one long, unending black line in a half-circle around the city." The Boers had burned all the grass on the surrounding hills, so that against the black surface of the veldt the khaki uniforms of the Imperial army would be visible for many miles.

At this stage of affairs it was very desirable for me to secure a horse. At any moment a contingent of British troops might come galloping in one end of the town, and, naturally, about that time I would like to be galloping out at the other end at the same time. I found that it was impossible to buy any sort of an animal for the simple reason that the owners all had the same idea as I about the inadvisability of being "around" when the khaki streams began to pour into the streets of Pretoria. Borrowing was equally out of the question. Colonel Blake proving very friendly, I offered a proper inducement to several of his men if they would "commandeer" a horse for me. The result was that for two days and nights the entire brigade were on the lookout, especially at night. One of them confided to me

that my friend Consul Hay had two very good greys which he hoped to get hold of that evening. I made no comment, but quietly decided not to call on Mr. Hay on horseback, if by any chance or fortune I should become possessed of a grey horse.

Since this might come to pass, I thought it would be a good plan to call on the Consul before I took to riding; so after dinner Mr. Aamsden and I walked out to the pretty little suburb, "Sunnyside," where all the foreign consulates were situated, and, following the direction of a large American flag, waving sixty feet above the road, we found underneath its graceful folds the house of Mr. Hay. In addition to having met him at East London, while he was on his way to Pretoria, I also had a letter of introduction to him from his father, Colonel John Hay, Secretary of State of the United States. It was quite a surprise to him to find me turn up in Pretoria without having been captured, for he had really expected to find me sooner or later among the prisoners on the race-course, where they were penned. However, he gave me "the glad hand," and after an hour's chat about affairs in general and ourselves in particular, we had our photographs taken, Mr. Aamsden kindly manipulating my camera. Unfortunately, this film, like many others equally important, was ruined in the developing. The photograph I had taken at East London of Mr. Hay, however, had turned out more satisfactorily, and I had the pleasure of giving him a print of it before I left Pretoria.

Returning to our hotel, we had dinner with Colonel Blake and some of the Irish Brigade, who furnished us with ample excuses for their dilatoriness in the matter of stealing riding-horses for us. During the afternoon, while sitting in front of the hotel, still hoping and praying for those mounts, I was semi-paralyzed to see sitting in a pass-

PASPOORT.

Departement van den

PRETORIA, Z.-A. R.

2 JUN. 1900
COMMANDANT GENERAAL

AAN ALLEN DIE HET MOGE AANGAAN.

VERLOF wordt hiermede verleend aan Fred. W. Reitz

om per spoor of anderszins te reizen naar doorloopend om met de Ierschen Corps te gaan als correspondent en

Alle onderdanen en ambtenaren van de spoorweg en krijgsmacht

worden vriendelijk verzocht dit document als paspoort te beschouwen en als zoodanig te eerbiedigen.

(Handteekening) [signature]

(Betrekking) [signature]

Gezien
Gelieve den heer Longer en zijn bagage met loo ondergeschikten te Komatipoort
[signature]
In Dorp
24.6.00

Transvaal Correspondent's Passport attaching author to Irish Brigade, and countersigned by Staadt's Secretary F. W. Reitz.

ing carriage Mr. Donahue, of Sydney, Australia, one of my co-war correspondents on Lord Roberts' staff. Beside him was a portly, important-looking gentleman of middle age. Without thought of formality I ran after the carriage and jumped in. Donahue's turn of paralysis followed. When he recovered, mutual explanations followed, and I learned that he had been captured by a Boer patrol a few days before while riding near Johannesburg. He was placed on parole, and was now the guest of Mr. Mendelsohn, the proprietor of the "Standard and Digger's News," of Johannesburg. This was the gentleman beside him in the carriage. While under parole he was not given much freedom, and the carriage ride was taken at some risk of being followed by closer confinement. From him I learned that two other correspondents were paroled and under guard in rooms at the very hotel at which I was stopping. As I had met one of them during the raid after De Wet to Dewetsdorp, I took my card and knocked at their door as soon as I could get back to the hotel. I found Lord Cecil Manners and the Earl of Rosslyn very comfortably housed, but rather bored, and very glad to receive a fellow-correspondent of the Imperial army.

Naturally they were greatly surprised to see me free in Pretoria while they were confined, and still more so to find that I had a correspondent's commission with the Boer forces. They thought, of course, I had been captured also, and in some mysterious manner had acquired my freedom and all these privileges. I explained the situation, and passed a very pleasant half-hour with them. The Earl was kind enough to ask me to take dinner with them, a courtesy I was compelled to decline because of a previous agreement to dine with Colonel Blake. In this connection I mentioned the Colonel's name, and both gentlemen were interested at once in what I had to say of the man. Lord

Rosslyn then asked me to bring Colonel Blake to call on them; but as I was ignorant of that doughty warrior's opinion of British aristocracy, I could only say I would do the best in my power to induce him to call. After dinner I mentioned the fact to Colonel Blake that I had called on the prisoners upstairs, and that they had asked me to bring him in to see them. He looked rather blankly at me until I added, "They seem to be under the impression that you are some impossible sort of a swashbuckler, and I would be very glad if you would go up with me and let them see what sort of a man you really are." That was enough.

"Where's their room?" he asked, starting up the stairway ahead of me. "Of course I'll go up to see them, and you'll see that I know just how to talk to them, too." When we entered the room he followed my introduction, while shaking hands, by saying,

"I want you gentlemen to know the notorious Colonel Blake, as that wretched rag, the 'Cape Times,' has called me." We spent the entire evening with the distinguished prisoners, and the Earl and Colonel Blake found that they had been opposite each other during a number of engagements near Ladysmith, which gave their conversation a unique and interesting flavor. Lord Rosslyn also wanted to know how he could recover fifty thousand pounds damages from my American paper, which he said had libelled him in a most outrageous manner, picturing him as a ballet-dancer some years before, when he had taken part in private theatricals. As he said,

"I don't mind the picture so much; but what I base my claim for damages on is that the paper said that my dancing was so bad that the audience hissed me off the stage." This seemed to annoy him greatly, though he did not mind our laughing at him about it. It then transpired, curiously

enough, that Colonel Blake had been present at this very performance at Queen's Hall, in London, and that started the two off "reminiscencing" again at a great rate.

I had some conversation with the gentlemen on the propriety of my having changed sides during the war. I quite agreed with them that it had established a dangerous

The captured Correspondents on the portico of the Grand Hotel at Pretoria overlooking the Market Square. The Earl of Rosslyn, of the "Daily Mail," and Lord Cecil Manners, of the "Morning Post." Colonel Blake, of the Irish American Brigade, is standing between, leaning against the post.

precedent, and should have been by no means allowed; that it was bad form and a questionable proceeding altogether; while on the other hand they returned the compliment by agreeing with me that from the newspaper point of view it was a brilliant and commendable piece of work. I held the view that a newspaper man was a non-combatant,

and should have a status something like that of a Red Cross man, being equally neutral. It seems to me that news-gathering during a war is not a national but an international affair, concering all nations equally. The Earl of Rosslyn agreed with me, for he had based his claims for release on these very grounds. Lord Manners was non-committal.

Nominally and technically speaking, a war correspondent is not a non-combatant. On the contrary, he generally is decidedly a participant in hostilities. Not that he often does any actual fighting ; I myself went through the entire period of my experience on both sides during the war, and never carried a more formidable weapon than my riding-whip and a small penknife for sharpening my lead-pencils. But, really, I was a participant in the war on both sides. Every time I carried an official despatch for Lord Roberts I was aiding the British cause. I know positively that it was a common practice for correspondents who had been out with the scouts to report, on their meeting the commanding officer of a body of troops, what they had seen of the enemy's positions.

Then, too, when writing to their papers, the British correspondents left nothing undone to harm their enemy's prestige, not hesitating to give outrageous calumnies as facts, even falling so low as to attack the chastity of the Boer women.

I think I have given sufficient reasons for deciding the status of a correspondent. He is a combatant, and one of the most efficient and deadly, and it is my opinion that whenever he is captured he should be treated as a prisoner of war. The only proper alternative is the organization of an international association of war correspondents and the selection of men whose personal character will enable them to command implicit confidence, and men whose neutrality

will enable them to report the facts as they occur without color or prejudice. The war correspondent is a necessity, for he is the direct representative of the public. At the same time, he is unquestionably a military nuisance. Such a proceeding as my own in going from one side to the other during the continuance of hostilities should either be universally condemned and made in the future impossible, or else it should pave the way for an international status for the

Dutch Reformed Church directly opposite President Krüger's residence in Pretoria. Before and during the war, when his health would permit, the President would preach powerful sermons from the pulpit of this church.

war correspondent, giving him still greater privileges. My own participation in the hostilities was confined to the carrying of despatches, which I repeatedly did for the authorities on both sides; further than that, either in act of arm or word of mouth, I maintained a thoroughly neutral course, and strictly adhered to the implied and defined stipulations of my commissions; but at the same time I frankly admit that it was a dangerous precedent to establish, and that in

future wars it should be made impossible by professional ethics as well as by military regulations.

Colonel Blake was greatly pleased with his reception by "The Lords," as he called them, and during the next two days was a frequent visitor to their rooms. I trust he and I made an equally favorable impression on them. I had met Lord Manners before, and found him the same quiet, dignified gentleman of the earlier days in Bloemfontein, differing only by the addition of an air of languid weariness brought on by the lack of exercise. Lord Rosslyn was busy in writing his diary, and showed no signs of boredom, being very much alive and interested in what the Colonel had to say. Their discussion of the merits of the war, when we all freely expressed our honest opinions without reserve, was interesting in the extreme; I regret that it was of such a nature that its implied privacy forbids its repetition. I can only say for Colonel Blake that he made the surprising statement,

"The English people are the best friends I have, and against them I have no feelings. My fight is a personal one, and is against those three scoundrels, Rhodes, Milner and Chamberlain, and until I die they will always have me to fight, whether it be here in South Africa, in a Continental army in Europe, or in the Orient." This personal bitterness dates back to the days of the exploiting of Rhodesia and the Chartered Company, when certain exposures in the British press by Colonel Blake precipitated a financial collapse and made a general sensation, also many and powerful enemies for the Colonel. "But that is another story," which the Colonel told Mr. Aamsden and myself after we left "The Lords" that evening, talking until far into the night.

The evening had been intensely interesting to Mr. Aamsden, who had accompanied us, as well as to me,

although I cannot honestly forgive the three captured correspondents for getting into Pretoria before I did, and thus preventing my achieving the honor of being the first of Lord Roberts' correspondents to get into the enemy's capital.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE LAST DAY AT PRETORIA.

THE next day was Sunday, and the streets seemed to be entirely deserted. The first thing I did was to hunt up Colonel Blake. In his turn, the first thing he did was to hunt up "The Lords." The proprietor of the hotel was a German; and, since it was obvious that within a few days the English would be in possession of the city, Blake and the Boers generally were at a discount with him, while lords, even in confinement, were at a big premium. The result was that while "The Lords" had all the liqueurs, cigars and cigarettes they wanted, Blake and some others found themselves unable to get a drop of anything; for, in addition to the Boer laws against selling liqueurs during the reign of martial law, the supply still on hand was being carefully hoarded by the crafty Teutonic landlord until the arrival of the British.

This being the situation, it is not surprising that "The Lords" became a popular resort among the select few who had the privilege of their acquaintance. Photographs were taken of them on the balcony outside their room, where they had the right to promenade. Frequent visits were made to them during the day "to keep them posted," for, poor lords, they had no means of knowing what was going on except through their visitors. Later in the morning Colonel Blake escorted Mr. Aamsden and me to President Krüger's cottage, where we were introduced to two of the old man's daughters, and by special influence of the Colonel we were allowed to take a photograph of the inte-

rior of the Presidential parlor, showing a huge gilded eagle, the emblem of liberty, presented by Colonel Blake, as chairman of a committee of Americans, to the President at the time of the Jameson raid. The remainder of the day was spent in photographing various scenes of interest about town.

The Piazza or Stoop of the White House, President Krüger's Cottage at Pretoria. The persons are, from left to right, the youngest daughter of the President, his grandchild, one of his daughters in-law, the author, and Colonel Blake, of the Irish Brigade.

Incidentally I met Mr. Sutherland, who had accompanied the Philadelphia messenger boy who had brought a message of sympathy for the Boers to President Krüger from the boys of the Quaker City. A law-and-order committee had been organized to police the city after the withdrawal of the burghers, and to prevent looting and other

lawlessness before the entry of the British, when the city should be surrendered. Mr. Sutherland, after acting as escort for the bearer of the message of sympathy, had himself been placed on this police force, and had made arrangements to be the bearer of the city's surrender to Lord Roberts. Whether this spectacle of an American surrendering the capital of the Transvaal, another republic, took place or not, I cannot say.

During the afternoon there were a number of false alarms that the British were entering the city. A few days previously the city was about to be surrendered, a panic having caused the burghers to withdraw; they returned again, however, and no damage was done beyond the looting of some government stores by a mob. As was done in Bloemfontein, barricades were erected in front of the plate-glass show-windows of the principal stores. I noticed a crowd in the street toward evening surrounding a man in khaki, with whom I quickly had some conversation, his guard making no objection. He was a scout who had been captured near Johannesburg, and was spreading the information to the surrounding crowd that Generals French and Hutton, with twenty thousand men each, were approaching Pretoria on either flank, while "Bobs," with forty thousand infantry, was marching in the centre. This was probably correct. Accurate information was hard to obtain, for the regular authorities had left the city, and their substitutes were in a perturbed and confused state of mind, being besieged with applications for information from all quarters, and giving more or less inaccurate replies—in Dutch. I depended mainly on Colonel Blake for information, as he had guaranteed to keep me informed in time to leave the city before the British should enter. There was nothing I so much dreaded as to run the slightest risk of being detained by the English authorities, if even for only

half a day, for in that time something might happen, the missing of which might mean professional disaster to me as a correspondent.

After another evening spent with Colonel Blake and "The Lords" we retired for the night, it being very un-

The parlor of the White House, showing huge gilt American Eagle, presented to President Krüger by Colonel Blake, as chairman of a committee of Americans during the time of the Jameson Raid. This is the only photograph of the parlor of the White House taken up to this time.

certain who would be in possession of the city in the morning, Boer or British. Before we had put out the lights our room was invaded by a half Dutch, half Irish scrub-woman, as ugly as sin, and certainly not less than fifty years old. She demanded a revolver of Colonel Blake. She said, "They say the British soldiers are going to take the city

to-morrow, and I am a lone woman, and I want to have a revolver to protect myself against them." She was very much excited, and it was with much difficulty that Colonel Blake convinced her that the British soldiers would not harm her. "They may be brutes, but her face is sufficient protection," added Blake as the old woman pottered off.

In was evident the next morning that Pretoria was to fall at once. Early, before breakfast, heavy guns were heard to the south of the city. Their dull boom came faintly through the open windows, and recalled the days of Paardeburg and the heavy black pall of lyddite vapor over Cronje's laager. It was estimated that about fifteen thousand burghers had concentrated for the defence of the capital. General Botha really only had about 2500 to defend the city. There was little excitement in Pretoria, although there were many people on the streets, and squads of horsemen were continually galloping by in every direction. Gradually the majority found their way along the road leading to the railway station, beyond which the fighting was expected to take place. On the way to the station, in passing the railway offices I dropped in, asked for the superintendent, presented my credentials, and received for Mr. Aamsden and myself railway passes over the entire line. Then for greater security I had my baggage conveyed to the station, while my partner decided to stay and see the entry of the British troops. I was determined to get out before this could happen.

The streets were now filling up; many of the burghers were dismounted, but nevertheless hurried along on foot, eager to be at the front to aid in resisting the attacking forces. The regular daily train eastward was to leave at eleven o'clock, and as that hour approached, to quiet a vague feeling of uneasiness I moved my baggage close to the train. So far as I could learn, the exceptional occasion

would not cause any change in the running of trains by the railway authorities, and this would be the last train until next day. A big crowd was gathered at the station, but I was somewhat surprised not to see more people getting ready to leave; there were very few, as the refugees had almost all left in the preceding week. Those remaining were prepared to endure a siege or surrender into the hands of the enemy.

Colonel Blake had sent a dozen or more of his unmounted men to entrain for the new capital at Machadodorp, for he was fearful of the kind of treatment his Irish lads might receive if captured by the British. His mounted men could be depended upon to take care of themselves. He himself was galloping off on a fine Irish hunter he had captured from an English officer at Ladysmith. He waved his hand to me, and his white silk handkerchief about his neck showed up brightly in the sun as he turned a distant corner, and I had had my last look at that gallant officer and soldier of fortune, Colonel Blake, formerly of West Point and the United States army.

On the hills above the station were seen groups of men and women watching something on the other side. Oh, if one of those confounded Irishmen would only commandeer somebody's horse for me, so I could ride out and see the battle! I would rather lose my baggage than miss that. On the hills were forts faintly visible, but they appeared to be unoccupied. As a matter of fact, they had been dismantled the preceding night, the heavy guns had been brought down to the station, and were at this very time mounted on railway trucks for removal. For months these guns had stood guard over the city in a semicircle of forts surrounding it, silently awaiting the arrival of the Imperial army, but with their muzzles pointed toward the town. Why was this? No one could tell me; perhaps they were

waiting for the occupation, and would then belch forth their showers of death upon patriot and foe alike, that Oom Paul's prediction would become true—"The price of peace will be one that will stagger humanity."

However that may be, they were now dismantled and ingloriously packed on low ballast trucks, to be hauled out of range and out of danger. A few men and women, and perhaps half a dozen men besides the Irish contingent, were

The last passenger train leaving Pretoria before the surrender, on which the author was a lucky passenger.

boarding the train. The Colonel failed to make good his promise to have a horse commandeered for me, so I walked nervously about, pretending to be intensely interested in the cannon and Maxim guns on the trucks near by, ready to be pulled out of town at the first indication of danger. Which way would they go? eastward for safety, or southward for defence? But I was not a bit interested. I would have liked to go out, even on foot, to see the fighting; but to risk missing the last train, and thereby becoming cut

off from the Transvaal government and my news-getting, was a serious matter.

Eleven o'clock came, yet the train did not start. I bought half a dozen oranges from a vendor, gave a few away, stuffed some into my pockets, and mechanically peeled one for myself. A few minutes after half-past eleven a bell clanged three times in quick succession, whereupon I threw my baggage through the window of the nearest empty compartment, and, after a quick good-by to my partner, swung myself on the train as it moved off.

The die was cast. If the British were driven back, I had made the mistake of my life. If the Boers fell back, my staying would be as bad. I found myself selfishly hoping for the fall of Pretoria, that my judgment in fleeing might be vindicated. The city remained in sight, as the train moved slowly off, for half an hour. At the same time the British opened fire with their naval guns, and several lyddite shells were seen falling into Pretoria. Thank goodness, I was right; if the British were near enough to drop shells into the city it would surrender at once, and I would be safely out of it, and in just the nick of time. But one thing marred my satisfaction; my overcoat, the companion of my trip to the Klondyke—light, stylish, and durable, endeared by many associations, and just the thing for horseback riding—this precious article of clothing had been forgotten, and was still in my room at the Grand Hotel.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A CHAPTER OF COINCIDENCES.

THE train rushed jerkily on toward Middleburg, and then on to Machadodorp, where I arrived late at night—too late for supper, and just in time to secure the last vacant bed in the hotel, and even that not an object of vanity. I had eaten nothing but a few oranges since breakfast, every one was in bed, no information was to be had, it was bitter cold, and sleep was well-nigh impossible, so I lay awake and reflected how the more widely a man travels the more he realizes how very small the world really is. This line of thought was suggested by an incident of my trip from Pretoria to Machadodorp that afternoon. I scraped acquaintance on the train with a German newspaper man, and as a result of our friendship, casual though it was, the following curious coincidences occurred. It will be remembered in the part of my narrative describing the advance on Bloemfontein I devoted some space to a trip I made from Modder River station to Osfontein camp in company with Mr. Alfred Hutton, the Reuter's Agency correspondent who escaped from Ladysmith during the siege of that place. Among the many tales with which Hutton had enlivened the tedium of those two days in the veldt was one of how, after writing a long cable message, he had entrusted it with his last and best horse to a Kaffir servant, and sent him out into the darkness to find a way through the Boer lines to the telegraph office in the British camp under General Buller. After escaping, he learned that the Kaffir had

never reached his destination. His fate—whether killed or captured—was unknown. Hutton regretted the loss of the horse very much. The weeks had rolled by rapidly since then. Poplar Grove, Driefontein, the occupation of Bloemfontein, French's raid in the southeastern part of the Free State in pursuit of De Wet, and finally, after a long

Dismounted members of the Irish Brigade *en route* to Machadodorp, the new Capital, to avoid falling into the hands of the British, from whom they expected torture and execution.

and weary wait, the general advance northward toward Pretoria had followed.

Meanwhile a strange destiny had taken me away from the British army at Brandfort, back to the Cape, then up the east coast to Lorenzo Marquez, and finally, on June 1st, into Pretoria itself, where four days later I started eastward again on the last train to leave that city, on which I had the fortune to meet this German correspondent in my compartment. He was also a Transvaal burgher, and had

been fighting valiantly with both pen and Mauser for their cause.

He grew quite friendly during our trip, and, among other tales, told how, while on patrol near the Utrecht laager, close by the railway station outside of Ladysmith, one dark, stormy night during the siege, he saw a dusky-mounted figure approaching which took no notice of his repeated challenges. After the third warning, as the figure appeared to be attempting to avoid him, he raised his rifle and fired. The stranger turned to escape, but the second shot tumbled him off the horse, which immediately stopped and stood still. The rider was a Kaffir, and the correspondent found, on examination, that the bullet had struck him in the neck, entering the spinal column and killing him instantly. He captured the horse and turned over a bagful of papers and letters to his commandant. On inspection of these, a package was found which, owing to his profession, the commandant allowed him to keep, as well as the horse. Here my German friend cut short his narrative to open a small school-bag which was doing him service as a writing-case, and took out a stained and worn bundle of telegraph forms, on which were some words written in lead-pencil. These I read through with interest to the end, where my startled eyes read, in the place designated for the sender's signature, "A. Hutton, Reuter's Correspondent, Ladysmith." It was the lost message! Neither money nor persuasion would induce my new friend to part with the original papers. However, he allowed me to make a copy of them, I following every line and word closely, even imitating the original mistakes and corrections made by Hutton.

As the captor of the horse and papers has since left the Transvaal and returned to Germany there is no harm in my giving his name, which he signed to my copy of the mes-

sage. He is well known in Germany through his correspondence to many papers during the war. By way as a finale, he said, when I told him I knew Hutton,

"The horse is still in Johannesburg. I told my boy to kill him if the English came; but if it is still alive, tell your friend Herr Hutton that I make him a present of it back again—if he can find it." He signed his name "Fritz van Strarten, Editor, Suid Afrikanische Correspondentz, Johannesburg, P. O. box 624." Three months later, by another mere accident, I nearly collided with Hutton himself one Sunday evening while walking in Piccadilly, London. I tumbled him into a cab, accepting no excuses, and after dinner at my hotel spread out this story and the copied message before him. Both he and I were about the last men each expected to meet in London, and our meeting at all was about as great a surprise as my having the copy of his original message, which he read through carefully, with amazement plainly depicted on his face, recognizing every word. When he had finished he looked at me long in silence, and then agreed with me that the "yarn" was only another proof that the world of men and things is very small indeed.

This meeting with the German correspondent, and the train of reminiscences it had started, furnished food for meditation while I shivered in that cold room at the Hotel Machadodorp the night of my arrival. Finally I fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE TRAVELLING RAILWAY CARRIAGE CAPITAL AT MACHADODORP.

WITH the first suggestion of dawn, hinting at the coming of another day, an answered knock at my door revealed a distinguished-looking officer, who proved to be Lieutenant Thompson, the Netherlands military attaché. He rolled up in his blankets on the floor and told me that he had left Pretoria, late in the afternoon, on a truck that was part of a freight train; that five lyddite shells had fallen near the station; and in Sunnyside, near the foreign consulates, a fragment of one shell tore away a part of the United States flag over the American Consulate. Also that heavy fighting was in progress, and that he had no idea of the result.

The night was very cold, so when he concluded I snuggled closer under my blankets and tried to imagine how miserable he must have been in that cold wind on the open truck. We got better acquainted in the morning as we took a dry wash on the same towel, and then went out to get breakfast and look at Machadodorp. In the dining-room of the hotel I met Captain Reichman, the American military attaché, presented my letters of introduction to him, and, after some conversation, requested him to introduce me to the proper government official, who he said was Secretary Reitz. Mr. Reitz had just left the dining-room and had gone to his private car. The car provided for the attachés was adjoining it, and so we all went there together, where I was duly presented to His Excellency, Staadt's

Secretary F. W. Reitz. Mr. Reitz invited me into his car, informing me that I was the only war correspondent remaining with the Boers, and that, this being the case, he would "take good care of" me. I asked him if Pretoria had surrendered, and, if it had, would the war be over? He did not know for certain, but assumed that the surrender would take place that morning.

"In any event," he said, "the war will not be over. Guerrilla warfare is certain for some time to come. Our

The new Capital at Machadodorp, showing a supply train leaving for the front at Balmoral, where General Botha was encamped.

burghers are determined to fight to the bitter end, probably retiring to Leydenburg, where we can continue to hold out for many months."

I learned that all the artillery had been successfully brought away, that two train-loads of English prisoners had been brought from the pen at Waterval and were on their way farther east, and that two more train-loads were expected later in the day. They were to be sent to Nooitgedacht and imprisoned in a barb-wired enclosure on the open veldt.

An official bulletin announced that the Federal forces had retired from the west to Pretoria before the British, who had advanced to within three miles. General Botha had informed Lord Roberts that he would abandon the defence of the capital, consigning the women and children to English protection. Then, cutting the wires to destroy further communication, he had retired eastward of Pretoria about six miles. During the evening and night the Imperial scouts entered the city. The formal occupation would likely take place the next day. General Botha had taken up a new position, half-circling the city, six miles eastward. President Krüger was still waiting for further information.

Later information came in that the Boers, about fifteen thousand strong, were falling back toward Middleburg with all their artillery. It was also said that General French had lost about one thousand men. This report lacked official confirmation. Secretary Reitz told me, also, that General De Wet had cut off Lord Roberts' communications south of Johannesburg, and that President Steyn, having "Proclaimed the Free State," was marching southward, and had informed President Krüger that he would "retake Bloemfontein." After I had extracted about all the general information from His Excellency that I could, I cautiously approached the main object of my trip into the Transvaal, and bluntly asked Mr. Reitz to secure me an interview with President Krüger.

"Quite impossible," was his answer. "You see, the President is now practically a refugee from his home, and since he was forced to leave Pretoria he has felt very sensitive about it, and refuses to be interviewed for any newspapers. Only two days ago a prominent American war correspondent, to whom he felt very kindly, made the same request, and I was forced to refuse him."

"Very well," I assented; "I have had the pleasure of interviewing you, at any rate." He laughed pleasantly, and said,

"I'm glad to be of any service to you. Come to me any time you want anything, and, if possible, I'll help you out." After some hesitancy I told Mr. Reitz of my having been with Lord Roberts for five months, and added, by way of explanation,

Captain Carl Reichman, the American Military Attaché to the Transvaal armies; who indignantly denies the report that he was in command of the Boers at Koornspruit when they captured seven guns, one hundred supply carts and six hundred prisoners from the British.

"I want to see something of this side, so as to be able to judge of the right and wrong in this war solely on its merits, without prejudice, and after having seen both sides myself." I hesitated considerably before making this confession, but I decided to do so on remembering scout Burnham's experience while a prisoner under De Wet, for I was afraid some idiotic English prisoner might recognize me and "give me away." Fortunately, as events proved, it

was the wisest thing I could have done. Mr. Reitz did not seem to think there was anything odd about my having come around to the Boer side, and merely said,

"I hope you will come to see that we are in the right, and do what you can through your newspaper connections to make the rest of the world see the same thing." At this juncture a message was brought to Mr. Reitz, which he read hastily, and then excused himself to me, saying,

"The President has sent for me; I must go at once. Don't hesitate to call on me at any time; I'll tell you if I happen to be too busy to talk."

We left the car together, and I began to wander about the station and the tracks, looking at the government outfit established in half a dozen private cars, with a printing-office and the Treasury Department in ordinary box-cars. Suddenly, back on the last siding, in a corner of a high embankment, I found the Presidential private car, with a travelling telegraph-office attached. There was a wide space in front, and the bright sunshine and a picturesque Johannesburg policeman on guard suggested a photograph. What was more, there was the old President himself, plainly visible at the window. I unslung my camera and pressed the button, taking a snap-shot. As I was about to walk away, I noticed the President and several other gentlemen inside the car were turning to look at me. Somewhat embarrassed, I started to walk more quickly and get out of their range of vision, when I heard some one calling me. Looking around, I saw Mr. Reitz standing at the door of the car. He called again, saying,

"I say, Colonel! I have been telling the President about you, and he wants to see you; now is a good time for you to get your interview."

I quickly pressed the button a second time, getting a view of the Secretary, and then followed him into the car.

I found myself in a comparatively luxurious apartment, half the length of the car, with a table in the middle, and revolving chairs alongside in front of each window. In one of these Mr. Krüger was sitting, a small pipe in his mouth, holding the bowl in his left hand. A rusty silk hat trimmed with crepe was on his head, his clothes were black, frock-coat pattern, dusty and soiled with drippings from his meals. He remained motionless when I entered, and after Mr. Reitz finished speaking while presenting me,

The famous railway carriage Capital of President Krüger, showing Secretary Reitz extending the President's invitation to the author for an interview.

the old Statesman held out his right hand for me to grasp.

His fingers felt cold and soft, reminding me of a fistful of small sausages. His hand remained limp, phlegmatically unresponsive to the pressure of my fingers. Then his hand dropped to his side, and he continued looking at me through his clear gold-rimmed spectacles, puffing out great clouds of smoke from his mouth and maintaining a silence which was fast making me nervous. Was he suspicious of this correspondent who did not hesitate to admit he had just come from the enemy's camp? There was not a word or

sign to indicate what he was thinking. It was plainly "up to me" to say something, so I pumped out,

"Mr. President, we Americans make it one of our boasts that every citizen has the privilege of grasping the hand of our Chief Executive. I have met Mr. McKinley, the President of the greatest Republic in the world; now I am proud to have met the greatest President in the world."

Then Mr. Reitz commenced talking to the President in Dutch, and I imagined that he was explaining that my form of lunacy was a mild one, and not at all dangerous. When he had finished he turned to me and said,

"I have been translating what you have said to the President; he does not understand English."

I waited for the President to say something; but he still remained exasperatingly silent. So I got off something about "American sympathy for courageous burghers," "plucky fight," "ultimate success," and goodness only knows what else beside; all of which was duly translated by Mr. Reitz. Oom Paul still looked fixedly at me, every alternate breath being chronicled by a dense cloud of Transvaal tobacco-smoke. His expression was that of great depression mixed with worry; yet there seemed to be an undercurrent of determination and unconquerable persistence which was likely yet to cost England enormous sums of treasure, life and energy before that iron will should be overruled. I now made up my mind that I would stare back at His Excellency with an expectant look on my face until he said something, if it was only "Thanks; come again." I suppose a full minute passed by in dead silence; I could see that Mr. Reitz was waiting for the President to collect his ideas into shape, so I kept quiet and waited. The old man's eyelids were very red and inflamed. His eyes were watery and glassy.

Suddenly he turned to Mr. Reitz, and raising his right

hand, bringing it down again as though hammering his sentences into the table, said in a deep, hoarse voice, his words coming out jerkily,—something in Dutch; which, of course, I could not understand. When he finished, Mr. Reitz turned to me and said,

"The President says that he feels greatly encouraged by the fine work which General De Wet and President Steyn have been doing in the Free State. That while it is very likely that the English are already in Pretoria, yet it will by no means follow that that means the end of the war."—As a matter of fact, this interview was happening at the very hour of Lord Roberts' entry into the city.—"Our burghers are fully determined to fight on to the last. We will never surrender as long as there are five hundred armed men remaining in the country." I then made some other remark about America having had a similar struggle against the same power a hundred and twenty-five years ago, which, when translated, started the President into vehement speech again, waving both hands violently and almost shouting his words. Then Mr. Reitz turned to me, and in a low, well-modulated voice, repeated in English the President's words:

"In a former war England sent thirty thousand blacks against us; now she is trying to crush us by sending three hundred thousand white men against thirty thousand burghers." Then followed some more conversation, in which the President asserted that the gold coin and bullion at Machadodorp and transported to Europe "was entirely government money," and that since he had come to Machadodorp "Pretoria is no longer the capital; the capital is now at Machadodorp." There was some remark about the probability of guerrilla fighting, and the other gentlemen joining in, the conversation became general; much of which, of course, was unintelligible to me, except when Mr. Reitz translated.

Finally, feeling that it was about time for me to go, I asked Mr. Reitz to ask Mr. Krüger if he had any message he cared to send to my countrymen through me. When this was translated to the President he appeared to think earnestly for a few moments; then, as though despairingly realizing that neither as a result of diplomatic negotiations nor of newspaper appeals to the public could foreign intervention be expected, he replied,

Foreign Ambulance Corps Wagons at Machadodorp.

"The time has passed for us to talk; there is now nothing left for us to do but to keep on fighting,—keep on fighting." Then the President sank into deep silence, looking straight before him into space with his lustreless eyes, slowly smoking,—a silence from which it seemed difficult to rouse him. His last words must have had greater expressiveness and feeling in Dutch than they had when translated, for the other gentlemen remained respectfully silent, and it appeared to me that in their glances at the old man there was

expressed a world of affection and feeling. When Mr. Reitz arose to indicate the interview with the President was at an end my camera was still in my hands, and I asked him if I might quickly take a snap shot at the interior of the car. He said, " No ; I think it would be better if you would not do so." Then the entire party left the car, leaving the old President still sitting in his chair, looking through the window and across the bare, open veldt, of which he had said, " I found this country a wilderness, and so will I leave it before I will allow my people to come under the English yoke."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"AT THE END OF A WIRE" ONCE MORE.

I NOW had material for a pretty good cable message to England, and after writing it out I went to Secretary Reitz and asked him to help me get it off at once over the official wire to Delagoa Bay, as the local operator had refused to send it for me. Mr. Reitz went to the office with me, but found that the wires were completely choked with highly important official messages, and as it was uncertain whether it would be properly transmitted to the cable authorities at Delagoa Bay he advised me to take it back at once to the coast and send it in person. About the same time a freight train was starting eastward, so after dinner with Mr. Reitz and the military attachés I left for Lorenzo Marquez, expecting to reach there sometime the following morning.

The road was very uneven, and the train ran swiftly down grade and around many curves. I sat on a box in the cold car talking with the conductor and another passenger, a Hebrew contractor, who had been at the capital to collect money due him for supplies. The rocking motion of the train was excessive, and produced a feeling of nausea and sea-sickness which made me doubly glad when we arrived, after several hours' run, at Waterval Boven, where I found the train would wait until morning before proceeding farther, because of the blocking of the line some miles farther on by the prisoners' trains, which had gone down that morning. I hunted up a nondescript hotel, kept by a half-caste Kaffir woman, the only accommodation available; and during a supper which was served only after considerable

persuasive power had been exerted, I enjoyed some rather interesting views of the war from my hostess, who was remarkably well-read and a splendid talker. She said, rather vigorously,

"This whole war has been nothing but a war of loot from the very start. Why, when the invasion of Natal began, the burghers looted every place they came to. Every man in the Federal army had his Cape-cart, drawn by two horses, and one or two nigger servants behind with

Group of Burghers at Machadodorp Preparing a Meal.

two or three extra riding horses. Some of the men had two or three carts, and every one of them was piled and loaded down with loot."

Later, in the course of conversation, I incautiously said that I had been with the English army. She interrupted me with,

"I knew as soon as you came in you were no war correspondent; you are a spy, that's what you are." I thanked her sarcastically for the compliment; but she quickly re-

plied, "Oh, I don't think any the less of you for all that. This place is full of spies; one never knows who one is talking to. People have been arrested and sent across the border on information furnished to the authorities by members of their own families. It's gotten so that one might as well talk to everybody as one feels like, or else keep quiet all the time."

I agreed with her that the latter alternative was too awful to be seriously considered, and then asked to be shown to my room. It was clean and comfortable, and I

Baggage-cart of Boer Commando, showing strings of "biltong" or jerked beef drying on lines hung over the "disselboom" or cart-tongue.

was soon sound asleep between the covers. Suddenly I was awakened by a noise, and sitting up, was half-blinded by a bright glare of light from a dark lantern in the hands of a man who was talking to me. I was wide awake in an instant, knowing that something had gone wrong. The man was talking in Dutch. I said,

"Speak English; I don't understand you."

"I must see your passport," he replied in broken English.

"Why must you see it?" I asked. "Who are you? What are you doing in my room? Get out—" I rattled

all this off, half-scared to death, yet realizing that it would be better to put on a bold front.

"I am a detective," he said, opening his coat and showing a big brass shield pinned on his vest. That stumped me; and I reached over to the chair on which my coat was hanging, took out my passport, and handed it to him. He looked at it for a moment in the glare of the dark lantern, and then, calmly folding it, put it in his pocket, saying,

"I must keep this."

"Great Scott!" I thought, "I'm 'up against it' now. Without that passport I can't get out of this town, and the scoundrel himself will probably arrest me the first thing in the morning for not having a passport. Hold on there!" I called to him as he started to leave the room, "Hand that passport back to me! What are you taking it away for?"

"That's all right," he said; "I must keep it till to-morrow; I'll give it back when I see you again."

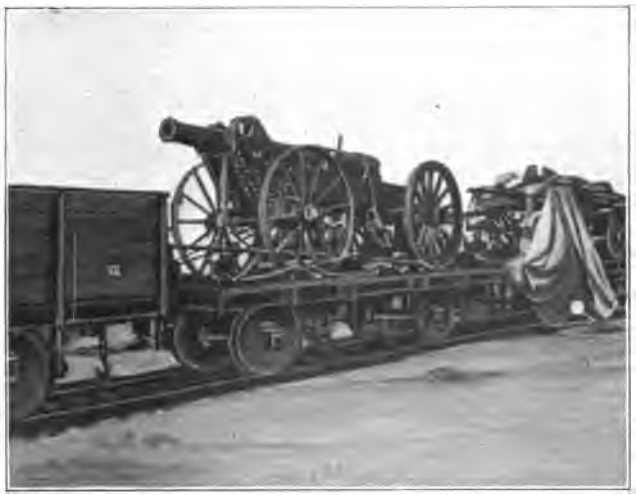
"But, man," I said, "I must make that early train; I am going to Lorenzo Marquez on important business and cannot be delayed; my train leaves at six o'clock."

"All right; all right; I'll be at the station," was all the satisfaction I got from him, and he was gone. Then, as I thought over the serious situation I was now placed in, and the extreme probability of my being arrested in the morning and denounced as a spy by my landlady, I began to get very nervous. Why had I been so foolish as to let the fellow make off with my passport? What an ass I was! Why didn't I take it away by force—fight, if necessary; anything but lose that valuable piece of paper.

Naturally I was unable to find satisfactory replies to these self-questionings, so I passed the remainder of the night sleeplessly wondering what developments the morning would bring forth. I was roused from the semi-doze

into which I had fallen by a servant with hot coffee and the intelligence that it was half-past five o'clock.

Hastily dressing, I paid my bill and went up to the station. The first man I met was the detective of the night's adventure. He came up to me and handed back my passport, and then walked off again without a word. I was considerably puzzled, and was still standing looking at the



Boer Long Tom. This gun was split in the muzzle by an English shell at Ladysmith—an accidental shot which put the gun out of commission for several weeks, until repaired by Boer workmen in the railway shops at Johannesburg.

passport in my hands, hardly realizing that it was actually there, and wondering if I had been dreaming, when my fellow-traveller of two days before, the German correspondent, came up to me. He was delighted to see me, and invited me to take breakfast with him, saying that there was plenty of time before the train started, and that he, also, was going back to Lorenzo Marquez. While grinding our particularly tough steak I told him of the night's

happening, and asked him to explain the reason of it to me.

"Oh, that's simple enough," he said; "that fellow couldn't read and he didn't want you to know it, so he took your passport off and showed it to some one who could read; and then, finding that it was all right, gave it back to you again; beside, he is a blank fool, any way." I was not entirely satisfied with this explanation; but as it was the only one forthcoming I had to be content. At any rate, I was glad that he found some one who could read, otherwise I might still be waiting at Waterval Boven station, while my passport continued circulating throughout Transvaal officialdom. By eight o'clock I was back at Lorenzo Marquez, having successfully passed the gantlet of baggage-searchers and letter-readers on the border at Koomaatiport.

Having reached the world where milreis by the thousand were exacted for every breath, I started the campaign toward insolvency by taking a carriage to a hotel and then sending out a porter in search of Begg, the Delagoa Bay representative of the "Express," whom I had learned was an English spy; yet, from his knowledge of "Express" affairs, it was necessary to see him before sending any cables. He came in an hour, and it was well I had sent for him, because he showed me a cablegram from the "Express" requesting "that Krüger interview immediately." They thought I had conferred with Begg before entering the Transvaal, and would send my interview to him to cable. He, not knowing anything about me, and merely knowing that the "Express" desired an interview with Krüger, coolly sat down and wrote one himself, and was about to send it off to London when I sent for him. It was a close shave for the "Express," for they could never have known the difference until too late.

Begg then wanted me to give him the use of my other information for local publication, and to forward to Cape Town; but I wasted no time in informing him that "Express" messages were for publication in London only. He also wanted me to send my news from Machadodorp, to which I intended returning at once, to London through

The President's Butchery at Machadodorp. Fresh meat was provided every day. No army has ever fared more sumptuously than the armies of the South African Republics, while the British are nearly always on half rations.

him; but I decided to make other arrangements, and told him so. He wanted to get angry about it, and probably did; but I was going back into the lion's jaws, and knew that anything published by Begg at Lorenzo Marquez would be sent at once to Machadodorp, where the Secretary of State would quickly recognize the similarity between the published report and the items he gave me,

thereby putting me under suspicion. I had had one experience with being suspected of being a spy, and, although it ended harmlessly enough, I had no intention of repeating the experiment or of having the most remote relationship with a real spy against the Transvaal Republic, which was treating me in too hospitable a manner for me, by act or implication, to hurt its cause in any way.

Having settled Begg for the time being, although later he managed to put me in a terribly dangerous position by way of revenge, I hurried to the cable-office, where my message was put on file, to go off as soon as the wires were clear. A day later it was published in London, my interview with President Krüger being the first official intimation of the fact that the surrender of Pretoria would not mean the end of the war, as had been generally expected would be the case. Then I went back to my hotel, wondering what new scheme I could concoct to provide food for that long steel and copper serpent of the sea, the Pacific Cable, which so greedily devours fact and falsehood alike at three shillings per word. How and where to get it I could not guess; only this I knew: its daily meal of two hundred words it must have, if unhappy and distracted I had to upheave a continent to find the "copy." And if any portion of the newspaper-reading public finds occasion to object or in any manner find fault with the news sent from one side of the world to the other, I only suggest that they get out and try the job themselves.

CHAPTER XL.

STEALING A "SCOOP" IN ORDER TO BENEFIT ITS OWNER.

EARLY the next morning I called on Mr. Hollis, the United States Consul. He was asleep, but sitting on the stoop was a young American, who turned out to be an officer of Blake's Irish-American brigade. He was visiting Mr. Hollis for a few days before going back to America. After some conversation, it occurred to me that perhaps he would like to act as my assistant, return to Machadodorp with me, and then every day run back to Lorenzo Marquez to send my cables to London. Lieutenant Ryan, as was his name, seemed pleased with the idea, and I made him an offer which he accepted at once. Then he told me that the New York "Journal" had cabled to Mr. Hollis to have some one interview President Krüger and cable it to New York. This had been done, and the interview was already in the hands of the man who was to send it off. The interview used was one gotten through a visitor to Machadodorp the same day I was there, but who left in an earlier train. Giving Lieutenant Ryan several Bank of England notes, I sent him off to buy the interview, telling him to tell the party that "the New York 'Journal' war correspondent had reached here and would send the message himself." Ryan paid the fellow about four pounds and got the message from him. I took it at once to the cable-office, sent it after the first interview, and added, "Forward New York 'Journal;' co-operation highly desirable." I will not expatiate on this operation from the ethical standpoint, for through my sharp practice the

"Journal" got its interview a day earlier than otherwise it would have done, for the other man was procrastinating sadly. Also, the "Express" had the use of the extra interview in London, where it appeared as part of the first one. Further, and strangely enough, a cable despatch was already on its way from London to me, saying, "Join Krüger as representative of New York 'Journal.'" This was from the "Express," which had already made the deal

The Travelling Capital's Treasury Car, showing the Staadt's Treasurer paying claims in paper money worth five shillings on the pound.

with the representative of the "Journal" to give it the American use of my work in the Transvaal. I received this despatch that evening, and, showing it to Mr. Hollis, told him that I was now the correspondent of the New York "Journal," and that I would be glad to have him give me a letter to Mr. Reitz to that effect.

The next morning Ryan and I started back for Machadodorp, where I presented my letter, and, as a result, Lieu-

tenant Ryan was furnished with passports and railway passes; also a special passport allowing him to cross the border without examination of his baggage or letters. I received a similar one some time later. Lieutenant Ryan, for the time being, had become an employé of the Transvaal Government, I paying his salary. His work was to carry my letters and despatches to Delagoa Bay, incidentally taking messages for the government to the Dutch Consul at that point. From this time until I left the Transvaal Lieutenant Ryan carried most of my despatches, although later on I found a way to have them sent direct from the capital at Machadodorp by wire. At times, when I made short excursions away from that place, Ryan staid behind and sent messages for me. In this way I "broke him in," so that when I left for London he was fully qualified to take my place; and he remained, acting as correspondent for the "Express," for some months, until the Boers were compelled to abandon the railway.

Thus it came about that an officer in the army of the South African Republic came to serve as a war correspondent for an English newspaper. As for Begg, I took good care not to see anything more of him. I learned from Mr. Hollis that Mr. Sangree, an American correspondent who had been in the Transvaal, while stopping at a hotel in Lorenzo Marquez, had had all his private papers and notes stolen. From another source I learned that the man Begg was suspected of being implicated in the affair. I hope he did get the papers, and that he turned them over to the British authorities to read, for among them was a humorous story about the English prisoners' quarters at Pretoria, entitled, "Uncle Paul's Asylum for Absent-Minded Beggars," which article would doubtless prove edifying reading for those in charge of the British War Office.

While on the way to Delagoa Bay, after having secured

my interview with President Krüger, I met Consul Hollis at Waterval Oonder station, where my train passed the up-train. He told me he was on his way to see the President, who had sent for him, and invited me to go along back to Machadodorp, assuring me that I would arrive at Delagoa Bay just as soon, as he had been promised a special train for the return trip. I was not surprised to hear this, for I had had some intimation of his coming while yet at Mach-

The Hotel de Machadodorp, where the officials and attachés took their meals. Colonel Gourko, the Russian attaché, is to the right of the photograph.

adodorp, and was on the lookout for him. I declined the offer to go back, and continued my journey to Delagoa Bay in company with Mr. Van Alphen, Postmaster General of the Transvaal Republic. I thus got my cablegram off a day earlier. From Postmaster General Van Alphen I learned that while Mr. Hollis was at Koomaatiport, at the boundary between the Transvaal and Portuguese Territory, having gone there on affairs relating to American interests,

President Krüger telegraphed to Van Alphen to approach Mr. Hollis on the subject of his taking refuge in the American Consulate, as he did not feel safe in trusting to the neutrality of the Portuguese, in the event of having to fly from the Transvaal. While Mr. Van Alphen and Mr. Hollis were in conversation, an additional telegram from Mr. Krüger arrived, asking Mr. Hollis to come on to Machadodorp; and in this way I happened to meet Mr. Hollis at Waterval Oonder, *en route* to see the President.

Mr. Krüger then asked Mr. Hollis if he would give him protection in the American Consulate in case he had to flee from the Transvaal. Mr. Hollis asked for time to communicate with his government, and Mr. Krüger assured him that he would give at least one week's notice before leaving the Transvaal. About this same time one evening Mr. Hollis was entertaining some of Secretary Reitz's family who were about to leave for Holland. They were sitting on the piazza when a crowd of Portuguese ruffians and British sympathizers approached and commenced stoning the Consulate, and giving groans and hisses for the American flag. Lieutenant Ryan, the assistant "Express" correspondent, who happened to be there also, quietly stepped out before them, and drawing his revolver fired it point-blank at the crowd, which immediately disbanded and took to its heels. The police were called out and took care of the men injured by Ryan's prompt action, and the affair was hushed up. Several nights later, when I called at the Consulate, before Mr. Hollis had returned from Machadodorp, I found three policemen on guard to prevent a recurrence of the trouble. The State Department at Washington undoubtedly received a notification from Mr. Hollis of Mr. Krüger's request, and the Consul was doubtless notified what course to pursue, and in all likelihood President Krüger was made aware of

the fact that his presence as a self-invited guest in the American Consulate was not desired by the administration at Washington.

At least I know that Mr. Hollis received instructions from Mr. Hay not to leave Portuguese territory again; for he was compelled to neglect the interests of the English prisoners at Nooitgedacht, where there was much suffering and complaint because of his neglect. The prisoners won-

The burghers form a ring about a group of English prisoners captured by General De Wet and sent to the capital at Machadodorp.

dered why Consul Hay did not visit them; they thought he had accompanied the government to Machadodorp, and were unaware that he had remained at Pretoria. On my return to London I was sorry to hear that Mr. Hollis had laid himself open to adverse criticism by going into the Transvaal, and in order to put him in a better light I published the above facts in an interview in the "Express" on June 15th. I think it only fair to him that it should be

known as publicly as possible that Mr. Hollis left Portuguese territory only to enter the Transvaal at the express request of President Krüger.

The information on which I base this statement was derived from various sources in which I had explicit confidence; but I also took the precaution of sounding Mr. Hollis on the subject, and from his guarded replies and inability to deny the truth of what I have said, there is no doubt that President Krüger asked for the protection of the United States Government, and was diplomatically discouraged from entertaining the idea seriously.

CHAPTER XLI.

LIFE AT MACHADODORP.

BACK again at Machadodorp, prepared for a long stay, having cabled to the "Express" that I would remain and "watch Krüger," hoping that he would bolt suddenly and take refuge on a Dutch warship, and that I might manage to accompany him—meanwhile I found time to look around more freely and see something of the Boers in camp and the little town itself. It was not much of a place. There were a dozen or more houses along the railroad; then, around a great open space, an embryo market square, were the sheet-iron buildings of two stores, the hotel, the post-office, and a few warehouses and station buildings. This was on the slope of a hill, with the railway on the summit and the hotel half-way down. At the bottom ran a small stream where the Boers gathered daily in small groups to bathe. In the centre of the square usually stood one or two huge trek-carts loaded with oranges brought in from some distant farm and sold to the burghers for a shilling per dozen—great, luscious fruit, quite reconciling one to the almost unquenchable thirst which the cold dry air induced. The government was installed in a series of railway carriages side-tracked on three or four sidings. President Krüger had a private car; so had Secretary Reitz. The military attachés had another, and in this Mr. Reitz furnished me with a compartment. Two of the attachés were domiciled in a private house; the other government officials had rooms at the hotel.

With the exception of the President, all took their meals

at the hotel, the proprietor of which was doing an amazing business.

Unfortunately for his profits, most of the officers were fed at government expense, and he was paid in weekly installments of paper money. This had fallen in value to about five shillings to the pound. This hotel usually flew the Transvaal flag, but, with every alarm, the German flag was run up instead, although its proprietor was an

The persistent staring of "the Bloody Boahs" becomes uncomfortable.

Englisman. There was a billiard-table in a back room, and it was no unusual thing of an evening to see a crowd of burghers, their rifles stacked in a corner, handling the cue with surprising skill, for, from their appearance, the assemblage might have been taken for a congress of hoboes. The average burgher, I found, was a sportsman in every sense of the word. With more or less roughness in appearance, yet there was always a gentleness of manner, a hesitancy to offend by word or act. Living on their large estates, the

natives doing all the harder work, they have developed into a race of primitive country gentlemen.

On the tracks between the President's and the Secretary's private cars stood a long line of trucks, carefully guarded by a detachment of Johannesburg police. No one was allowed to smoke near these trucks; they were loaded with ammunition, and contained enough to continue the war for another year at least. Adjoining the President's car was the official telegraph-station. Next to Mr. Reitz's was the printing-car, from which daily bulletins were issued containing news of the previous twenty-four hours. They were surprisingly accurate, and never as much distorted as English news when published in London, for the government had learned that in order to retain the confidence of the burghers they must be kept supplied with the facts. There were many burghers who wished the war over and were willing to surrender, but the majority were filled with a degree of patriotism which to me seemed almost fanatical, and of a type belonging not to real life, but to the grandiloquent history-books of my school-boy days.

Up on the high bank above the Presidential car stood a row of whitewashed huts, provided by the railway authorities for the use of its native employés, who were utilized as switchmen, track-cleaners, and in other subordinate positions. They usually dressed in half-civilized, half-barbarous clothes. It was no unusual thing to see a trackman walking along, an old silk hat or Derby on his head, a vest over his body, a discarded red window-curtain around his waist, his legs and arms bare, a railway lamp in one hand and a bundle of assegais or knobkerris—primitive South African weapons, both—in the other. It is quite impossible to disarm the native "Boy;" he always has half a dozen weapons of some nature within easy reach; and if these chance to be lost or sold, a bit of pointed iron,

ground on a stone and stuck on the end of a slender rod cut from a plank, re-arms him again. This custom of the natives creates a serious problem for the English if they conquer the two republics entirely. If they disarm the burghers, then, to protect them from the native population, which may go on the war-path at any time, a large army of occupation will be needed. If the burghers are allowed

Inside the ring, officers of the Thirteenth Yeomanry reading fresh magazines supplied by their captors.

to retain their arms as a protection against the enormous native population, sporadic outbreaks of rebellion are bound to occur for many years to come, which at any moment may spread into a gigantic flame of revolt from one end of the country to another. I do not want to pose as an alarmist; but, in all seriousness, I cannot fail to realize that Afrikanderism is a spirit which will persist in South Africa until its aim is accomplished.

Captain Reichman, of the United States army, introduced me to his colleagues, among them the Hollander officer who had spent part of my first night at Machadodorp in my room, and together we made a very jolly circle. Next to being a correspondent during a war, I would like to be a military attaché. The French and German members were at the front with General Botha. We were an essentially cosmopolitan circle. First, Captain Reichman, who

Some of the officers are allowed to take a walk to the store to buy cigars and oranges under an escort of one burgher with his Mauser.

indignantly denied the absurd report of a Reuter correspondent that he had been in command of the Boers during the British disaster at Koornspruit. As each mail brought him additional clippings and letters of inquiry from friends, he grew daily more wrathful and desirous of laying violent hands upon that enterprising but untruthful individual. Captain Ram and Lieutenant Thompson, Hollander officers, represented the young Queen Wilhelmina, and gallantly declared her to be the most beautiful woman in Europe,

which assertion I deeply regret my personal observations do not enable me to corroborate or refute. Colonel Gourko of St. Petersburg, son of General Gourko, recently deceased, had left the command of one of the Czar's regiments to watch the wily Boers' methods, and never seemed to realize that the rest of us all wished he would mention us in his will and then try to catch a lyddite shell in his hands; for the Colonel was a Count, and rumor credited him with the possession of a modest fifty million dollars.

In the evenings, after that terrible cable message had been gotten off my brain and on its way Londonward, we would gather together in the attachés' car by the light of a candle to discuss the war, the Boers, the English, life in general, or ourselves in particular. On one occasion I brought out my maps of the battle of Poplar Grove, having learned that Colonel Gourko and Lieutenant Thompson had been captured by the British there, while the other officers had escaped. Naturally my map excited great interest, and together we went over the day's fight, all learning many new things, which concluded with the astounding revelation to me that only twenty-five hundred Boers had confronted Lord Roberts' army of forty thousand.

Among other surprising things I heard from the attachés was one relating to the war in Natal. I cannot help feeling that whether winning or losing, this war will be a terrible blow to England's prestige, not because of the published reports, but because of the private reports made to their respective countries by the military attachés on both sides. The damaging shock to British prestige from this source may be estimated when one realizes that the attachés will report to their governments, as they told me at Machadodorp, for instance, that for five months during the investment of Ladysmith, thirteen thousand British soldiers in the besieged town were kept separated from seventeen

thousand under General Buller by less than four thousand burghers—much of the time by only twenty-five hundred.

Often we were joined for awhile by the old Secretary of State, Mr. Reitz, who would tell as good a story as any, although I never heard a profane word or an unclean expression pass his lips. Frequently, when the attachés were not at home, or upon leaving them, I would step into Mr. Reitz's car. He always made me most welcome, and

First-class railway accommodations in cattle cars "for absent-minded beggars only." British officers entraining for their new prison at Nooitgedacht.

would talk over the affairs and policy of his government with great freedom.

I often copied his telegrams from the front, and had them on the way to London, where they were printed, before they had been issued to the burghers. Mr. Reitz during his youth, while an impecunious attorney at Cape Town, had had some experience as a newspaper man, writing leaders for a local paper. He was greatly interested in my work,

and on several occasions, "to try his hand," as he said, wrote out my full cables for me. Once he laughingly said to me,

"If I lose this job I might want to apply for a position as a war correspondent myself, and this practice will be valuable."

On first meeting him I had been particular to impress upon him that while I would talk as freely as possible about my experience with the British, yet I could not forget that I had received many courtesies as the guest of the British army, and therefore would have to refrain from making any statements which might be valuable as "information." This was repeated by him to Mr. Krüger when I was interviewing that gentleman, and neither then, nor at any time during the four weeks I was in the Transvaal, were any questions ever asked me the answering of which would have been incompatible with the playing of my part as a man of honor.

CHAPTER XLII.

BEGG, THE SPY, GETS BACK AT ME.

ONE afternoon about five o'clock, while I was making my regular daily professional call before sending off my cable messages, a messenger brought in a telegram for me.

I tore open the envelope and read a message from the man Begg at Lorenzo Marquez. It ran, "'Express,' London, cables all messages from you to be sent through me." (Signed) "Begg."

On the table between the Secretary and myself lay two of Begg's daily news sheets, duplicated on a mimeograph at Lorenzo Marquez and subscribed for by all the hotels, clubs, and leading business houses. These copies were sent daily by Transvaal agents to Machadodorp. I knew by this that Begg was well known to the Secretary, and also the fact that he was an English spy. If the Secretary had read this telegram before he had allowed it to be delivered to me, as was very probable, I was in great danger of coming under his suspicion, and something unpleasant might follow promptly. Looking up, I saw his eyes concentrated upon me with a piercing glance. There was not much time for thought; I tossed the telegram over to him to read, saying to him, at the same time, "The London representative of my paper wants me to co-operate with this fellow Begg. He evidently doesn't know much about Begg. Under the circumstances I cannot obey my instructions. The information you give me is not for Begg, but for my paper and the papers it sells the news to." Then

I wrote out on a telegraph form, "'Express,' London: Co-operation with Begg impossible. Political reasons." (Signed) "Unger."

This I handed to the Secretary, who read it over, censored it with his pencil, gave it to the messenger, who took it off to the telegraph office, and the incident closed. The suspicion, if there was any, had entirely passed out of the old gentleman's eyes, and he never referred to the subject in

Tommy brings on the kit.

any way. Yet I am satisfied that Begg, whom I had especially enjoined not to attempt to communicate with me in any way, had for a few minutes placed my liberty, and possibly my life, in extreme danger.

Incidentally, this impossibility of our co-operating led to his duplicating the main features of my messages every day, about three days after I sent them, when they filtered across the border to Lorenzo Marquez, thus doubling the cable expenses to my paper. I explained this to Mr.

Reitz, and said, "This may cost me my position, but I can't help it."

When I arrived at London and explained the situation to the "Express" I was thanked for my promptness of action and told that Begg had been selling all his news to several rival papers, and had only just been found out. The result was that all my cables were exclusive news, and I succeeded in preventing any leaks along the line of communication. The mere fact that from Machadodorp, the capital of the Transvaal, I was able to cable direct to London, the capital of England, while the two countries were at war with each other, was in itself as unique a feat of journalism as I ever hope to repeat.

At this time daily reports were coming in of Boer successes. That De Wet and Steyn had cut Lord Roberts' line of communication south of Johannesburg had been confirmed. De Wet had captured, and, excepting what he could carry away, had destroyed half a million pounds' worth of supplies, including thirty thousand full suits of clothing and a great quantity of ammunition. I afterward learned that Lord Roberts had been completely isolated for a period of ten days. At the same time it was reported that the bubonic plague had broken out among General Buller's forces; the Boers, believing this, saw plainly the hand of God at last lifted to strike their wicked enemies. With the advent of cold weather and the isolation of Lord Roberts it was generally predicted that he would be starved out and be compelled to retreat to save his army. In the minds of the burghers Pretoria was to become a second Moscow, and Roberts was to suffer the fate of Napoleon, who saved only five thousand men out of half a million. Indeed, with De Wet in the rear, there were some who even looked forward to the destitution among the English forces becoming so great that out of humanity for his men Lord Roberts

would be compelled to surrender his entire army to General Botha to save his men from starvation.

We understood that the Imperial army in the Transvaal numbered eighty thousand. Secretary Reitz stated that the Boers still in commando ranged from fifteen to eighteen thousand. From all I could learn, there were at no time more than thirty thousand burghers under arms. Their losses by sickness and injury were trifling. Probably at all times one-fourth of the fighting force were on leave of ab-

The prison-pen at Nooitgedacht, a barb-wire enclosure on the open veldt. One thousand prisoners guarded by fifty Boers. Waiting for dinner.

sence, visiting their farms—living at home for a few weeks until the monotony of the farm, after the activity of the commando, together with the urging of the women, who were never satisfied when their brothers or husbands were not fighting, induced them to return to the front, usually with fresh horses, and with clothing in improved condition. The stories of Boer women fighting in the trenches were usually false. They did visit their men in their laagers, but were invariably sent away when there was any danger.

At Machadodorp I found the Irish brigade, which had become thoroughly scattered on the capture of Pretoria, slowly reorganizing. Colonel Blake had disappeared. One day I went as far as Middleburg to hunt for him, but failed to find a trace of him. The "brigade" now numbered about fifty men, and included a number of the boys who had come out from Chicago as "Red Cross" men. In justice to them it must be said that they did not enter the Transvaal as Red Cross men, their applications as such being denied by the Portuguese authorities. Their ultimate entry was as American citizens, on papers issued by Consul Hollis, and each one had taken an oath that he would not fight. On their arrival at Pretoria they found that there was no Red Cross work for them to do nor money to support them, and that work was impossible to obtain. The Russian Red Cross contingent were never put into commission at all—a proof of the lack of need for such service. The Chicago men thus found themselves destitute. About seven of them, having trained medical qualifications, were employed in other ambulance corps; the rest of them accepted Colonel Blake's offer and joined his brigade. They received no pay; all they got was food and clothing. They proved excellent fighters, and I have government authority for the statement that during the long retreat from Bloemfontein to Pretoria they were always the last to leave the field, and fought the rear-guard action for the entire distance. They were nearly captured at Brandfort, having gotten behind the English lines and within half a mile of where I was riding alone, though I did not know it at the time. On a number of occasions they were reported annihilated, but, as a matter of fact, Colonel Blake told me he did not lose a single man, though several, including himself, were wounded. The use of Blake's right arm was destroyed during the fighting in Natal. In speaking of the Irish

brigade, many burghers repeated to me, sadly, "If the rest of our army had only fought as bravely as the Irish brigade and Colonel Blake, we would not now be fugitives from our cities and farms."

I was surprised to learn from the attachés two things: first, that there were less than a thousand foreigners serving in the Boer army; and secondly, that the earlier successes were not due to advice in strategy from foreign officers. On the contrary, the Boers were exceedingly

Several members of the Irish Brigade making a stew.

stubborn about having their own way in their fighting, and indignantly resented any proffered advice from the few foreign officers who were with them. There were not many of these officers, and they all had subordinate positions, General Villebois, in command of the French brigade, being the only one having rank of that grade. Early in the year, when I was making my first trip across the Karroo on the Cape railway train, in company with a party of English officers, we were discussing the marvellous suc-

cesses of the Boers up to that time. "But," said one of these officers, in extenuation of English failure, "we must not forget that in the persons of the foreign advisers behind these Boers we are practically fighting all Europe. They have the advantage of the best skill and information at the command of France, Germany and Russia." This opinion I heard expressed frequently, and later on I found that not to the slightest degree was it correct. This was a great surprise to me.

To the circle of attachés I brought my tale of woe. Neither money nor influence had been sufficient to procure me a horse. My ignominious retreat from Pretoria by train had been the result of my failure to get a mount.

They sympathized deeply with me, for they were about to rejoin General Botha at the front. The morning following our discussion of the battle of Poplar Grove, Captain Ram, discovering that he had an extra pony, offered me the use of the same; and at his suggestion I accepted the general invitation to join the staff mess of the military attachés at the front. This was a result of my being the only war correspondent left with the Boers and of having spent six months with the enemy, for, naturally, these gentlemanly experts in war were extremely interested in what I could tell them of my observations while on the other side; and as they were neutrals, it was possible for me to talk to them with greater freedom than with any of the Boers.

CHAPTER XLIII.

WITH THE BURGHERS ON THE VELDT.

UNABLE to leave the capital the same day, I followed the attachés twenty-four hours later by train to Brugespruit. Here the train stopped for the night, as it was deemed unsafe to proceed any farther toward the enemy's lines. Unloading my pony and blankets, I started to ride another twenty miles to Balmoral. I had not gone two miles before the sun sank in a crimson bed, and a purple darkness descended over the veldt. I was afraid to go on, for fear of losing my way. Two men came riding along with their rifles across their saddles, and we stopped to talk. One of them was a correspondent for the "Digger's News," of Johannesburg; he advised me to return to Brugespruit with them, which I did, partaking of their scanty supper of eggs, sausage and coffee, and afterward rolling up in my blankets between them behind the station building, falling off to sleep under the clear gaze of the brightest of full moons, which deigned to rise near midnight. Forty or fifty burghers were camped around us, all sleeping on the bare ground, most of them with only a single blanket, though the air was cold.

With the coming of dawn and the invigorating warmth of the early sun we roused ourselves to forage for our ponies and our own breakfasts, and then, after a hearty good luck and good-by to my comrades of the night, I started again on my ride to Balmoral. Half-way I stopped at a farmhouse, bought a few bundles of forage for my pony, and at the cordial invitation of the farmer went into

the house to drink some coffee and eat a piece of cake. I rested and talked an hour, then up-saddled and started on. As I was about to ride off two men came riding into the farmyard, while half a dozen halted outside; one of them spoke to me and asked which way I was going. I answered, "I am looking for General Botha's army; where can I find it?" "Oh, that's all right," he said; "follow the railroad about ten miles and you will find it. I thought

A Boer commando drawn up in line to sing and pray for the Republics before starting out in the morning.

maybe you were going the other way. I was sent back here with a squad of men to turn back all stragglers." While I stopped at the gate to talk to his men the stragglers came along, were halted, told to return, phlegmatically accepting the inevitable without protest, but off-saddled to rest awhile before going back.

Meanwhile I rode on. Nearing Balmoral, I galloped past an outpost, answering the sentinel's salutation with a healthy

American "Hello!" Instantly I heard a whistle, and from behind a clump of bushes, a little farther on, another sentinel sprang up, rifle in hand, and called on me to halt. I immediately obeyed. He asked me, in Dutch, something which I requested him to repeat in English. This aroused his suspicion; but in tolerable English I was asked who I was, where I was going, what I intended doing when I got there, and a number of other personal questions. The first man was called back, and together they held a consultation in Dutch over the passport which I had tendered to them. Finally it was returned, they having concluded that I was "all right." Apologies were offered, they raised their hats, and I galloped on. Balmoral station I found surrounded by several small commandoes making camp; I was told the main army was farther on. I rode on four or five miles, through a rolling country, where every sheltered bit of ground was occupied by the Boer troops—a ragged army it seemed to be, though for the most part the officers were well dressed, wearing well-cut riding-trousers, and affecting a light brown or grey, which was the nearest approach to a uniform I saw.

As I was passing through the Heidelberg commando, an unusually large and comfortably equipped body of men, I was halted again on suspicion of being a spy or scout from the enemy's camp; for when again addressed in Dutch I answered in English, and persistently refused to talk in any other language; therefore I was detained and asked questions about my family, my clothing, etc., until the veldt cornet decided that I spoke the truth, and was indeed only a harmless scribe. So I was allowed to ride on in search of the military attachés for whom I was looking. Their cart came galloping up, and the driver shouted to me that "the boss" was behind. On I rode past the huge camp of the Heidelbergers, grouped around their fires cooking

their midday meal, or hanging strips of beef on strings, suspended from the disselbooms of their trek-carts, to dry in the sun and make the famous "biltong" which sustained them through many a long and weary march. As I reached the crest of a big ridge, before my eyes was spread a glorious view of the country for twenty miles toward Pretoria. Far off in the distance, and to the right, began a black dotted line, like the boundary lines on a map; it

Dismounted Burghers riding on ox-carts during the retreat from Pretoria. The Boer will never walk if any other mode of locomotion can be provided.

extended diagonally toward the left, coming nearer, zigzaging irregularly. I turned my pony loose to graze and seated myself on an ant-hill to watch, for down in the valley I saw a body of horsemen coming my way. Then, looking more closely, I saw another group behind; farther back was another; behind them I saw the long line of oxen drawing trek-carts, behind which were more horsemen, all stretching irregularly across the veldt until joining the

dotted line in the extreme distance; then I realized that from my vantage-point I was watching twenty miles of General Botha's army in full retreat from the British. They were falling back to Balmoral, where a series of high kopjes afforded excellent positions for defence. The first group that cantered by were mostly middle-aged men, dressed in their oldest clothes, greys and browns, their feet dangling loosely in the stirrups, their rifles slung behind their backs or laid loosely across the saddles in front, where a rolled blanket could be seen, while at the back of each saddle hung a bag balanced by a tea-kettle or coffee-pot blackened by a hundred fires. On each head was a dusty felt hat, surmounting a mass of thick hair. The face was heavily bearded, as a rule, while from the eyes two fearless glances like iron rods pierced me as the owner looked "Who are you? You are a stranger; stones may be thrown at you, but you aren't worth it;" and as the pony carried him by, the head would turn to the front again, and the incident of myself on the ant-hill was apparently forgotten.

The groups of passing horsemen grew more frequent and more numerous. Several that passed were of fifty or more burghers each. One or two transport carts lumbered creakingly by; then more horsemen, in pairs and singly. Occasionally a Cape-cart would pass, followed by a Kaffir servant with extra riding-horses, indicating either rank or wealth of the owner. A few of the individual horsemen had extra horses carrying surplus baggage. All rode at a trot or slow canter—not speedy, yet capable of covering forty miles a day for a week or more without doing up the horses. By this time the dotted line had resolved itself into a long procession of trek-carts, extending only halfway across the veldt; the end of it was in sight, and the advance of the enemy was not yet visible. The retreat,

therefore, was not forced, but regular and orderly, without even a rear-guard fight.

As I scrutinized the faces in the column of horsemen, each of whom passed by on the new-cut road within twenty feet of me, I wondered how their distinctive character might be summed up and expressed in a few words, a single phrase defining the entire man and his companions. I searched long for an adjective, but in vain. The subject was unusual, so the word must be unusual. Then it occurred to me that the men must be the result of their environment; the characteristics of the country must have been

One of Buller's khaki-painted guns, captured at the Tugela and put into commission by the Boers. The crews are composed of boys from twelve to eighteen years old, officered by one or two foreign soldiers of fortune.

impressed on their lives. I turned my head, looked out across the veldt, noted the characteristics of the land, and then I found what I wanted—the kopjes. The kopjes express the Boers; the Boers are kopje-faced. Their faces generally are as rough and rugged as any kopje ever stormed by British troops or defended by burgher warriors. The stolid expression of their faces is as impenetrable as the bare, grassless sides of those wonderful natural fortifications, yet their hearts are as soft and kind, when reached, as the great, apparently inhospitable veldt surrounding, which, as one who had lived on its bosom, I had learned to love

and trust without fear. Yes, the Boer is kopje-faced; and with the rough characteristics of those strange geological excrescences combines the equally stern, unchangeable virtues of strength and immovableness.

I was awakened from my reverie by a hand laid gently on my shoulder. Looking up, I saw I was surrounded by half a dozen young men, who had left their horses with a larger group by the road and walked over to where I was sitting. They were talking to me, and asking questions in Dutch, which was quickly changed to English when I requested it of them; and I answered the usual personal questions about myself, being amused at their simple-mannered way of approaching the subject, their doubt of my being "all right." I talked freely without enlightening them much, feeling secure in the possession of the passport inside my vest. After awhile I walked carelessly over to my pony, arranged his bridle, placed my foot in the stirrup, and was about to spring into the saddle, when I was halted by a voice saying,

"I say, old man, you won't mind coming over and seeing one of our officers, will you? You see we aren't quite sure you are all right." "Ah!" I replied; "you think I am English and a spy because I can't speak Dutch, don't you?" They began to explain; but I cut them short by displaying my passport and saying, "I am an American correspondent. Here are my papers. Does that satisfy you?" Quickly came a chorus of

"Oh, that's all right." "We hope you don't mind." "You see, we didn't know," and a dozen other apologies, all eagerly offered to heal any offence which they feared they had unintentionally offered another man—not the correspondent, mind you, but the man; for I have never, in all my newspaper experience, met a people who, as a class or as individuals, were more indifferent than the Boers to the

supposed magical powers of the knights of the pen. "The power of the press" was a phrase that had no meaning for them; and while I do not hesitate to say that much of the courtesy shown me by the British was probably directed to the war correspondent, all the kindness of the burghers was given to me as to a fellow-man; and I appreciated it more highly accordingly, as it was the subtler compliment. They helped me on my horse, petting and patting him as I mounted, for he was a beauty; and a cheery "good-by" came back in response to my farewell salutation as I rode off, feeling that the incident had brought me more closely than any other to the real Boer—the man behind the Mauser—the hero of the veldt.

I rode back past the Heidelbergers, deciding to hunt up the attachés' cart and await them there. I found that they had arrived before me, having returned by a different road. My reception by them placed me above suspicion, and I learned later that the burghers had passed judgment and decided that I was a consul, that the freedom of the camp and country was mine, and that I was not to be asked questions about the wife and children I didn't have.

CHAPTER XLIV.

GENERALS BOTHA, DELAREY, AND THE DYNAMITE BRIGADE.

AFTER supper I walked over to General Botha's headquarters, asked for Commandant Malan, and was by him introduced to General Botha and General Delarey. Both were very busy, holding consultations with their other officers and reading telegrams from headquarters; but they had time to talk a little to the only war correspondent left with them, and General Botha described the first day's fighting east of Pretoria.

"It was one of the prettiest fights we have had," he said. "The fighting-line extended for thirty-five miles, and the British would not have broken through at all if we had not been forced to send part of our force to the relief of one of the commandoes which had been surrounded."

I told him I had already cabled a full account of that fight to my paper, and then asked him if it was true that he and Delarey each had been offered ten thousand pounds a year by the British if they would lay down their arms and surrender.

"Yes, it is true," said Botha, while General Delarey nodded his head gravely.

"Well," I said, "didn't you find that offer rather tempting?" General Botha shook his head and replied,

"I have only one object now,—to continue fighting for the independence of my country." General Delarey said nothing, but kept looking at the camp-fire, gravely nodding his shaggy head in silent endorsement of his col-

league's sentiments, with an eloquence which was quite as emphatic as Botha's few words; and in Botha's eyes I caught an expression of lofty resolve and determination which was not unmixed with fanaticism. As the Generals were busy, I left them, with a promise to return early next morning to photograph them; then I returned to the attachés.

That evening we sat around the fire, for it was the winter season in South Africa, and told strange tales of

One of the deadly "pom-poms," or Vickers-Maxims, despised by the British, who were compelled to suspend operations two months until a lot could be sent out from England, after the Boers' first test on the Tommies at Magersfontein.

things which were and of many more which neither have been nor will be; for, except when "talking shop," military attachés and war correspondents are as other men, and the prophet has said, "All men are liars."

During the night we slept lightly, for we were camped between a detachment of the Irish brigade and the American scouts; so it was deemed wise to tie our horses' halters to our servants' wrists, to sleep on the few bundles of forage yet remaining, and to refrain from making un-

necessary comments on the amount of chicken feathers which marked the spot where a poultry-house had stood earlier in the day, but which, with its occupants, had vanished to furnish warmth and food for the foreign sympathizers who had so nobly come across the seas to aid the Boer cause.

With the first rays of the rising sun the following day I was back at the headquarters camp to take the promised photographs. The Generals were at breakfast; declining the invitation to join in a cup of coffee, I hurriedly "snapped" the breakfast party on the open veldt, and a few moments later took another of General Botha by his cart, where he had gone for a few moments to receive a report from an outpost. I found General Botha exceedingly cordial, as well as self-contained, and possessed of plenty of dignity. He is a young man—not more than thirty-five, and is idolized by his men. He is rather muscularly built, about five feet eight inches high, has dark-brown hair, a ruddy, healthy complexion, wears a moustache and small goatee, and appeared to be slightly conscious of his position as commander-in-chief, and thoroughly enjoyed it. General Delarey never said a word to me except when I was introduced to him and when we shook hands at parting; he looked at me when we were talking, and nodded his head from time to time, but made no comment. Neither of these men was in any way "playing for the newspaper public." They had their work cut out and proposed to do it, and whether the rest of the world ever found it out and took any notice of them or not was a matter of supreme indifference to them.

At breakfast in the morning, where I discovered that canned sourcrout was edible, our latest guest, Captain Ricardi, of the Italian brigade, informed us that he had been elevated to the command of the dynamite train and

crew, and invited us to view his men destroy a railway bridge about ten miles beyond our camp and only a few miles in front of the advancing lines of Lord Roberts' army.

It was nearly noon when we reached the bridge, which we found to consist of three spans over a large spruit. I first took a photograph of the entire structure from a distance of one hundred yards upstream. Then, after the custom of the Boers, I off-saddled my pony, leaving him

Commander-in-Chief Louis Botha holding a consultation with his officers at Balmoral.

to graze in a small field near a farmhouse close by, and made an examination of the work of the dynamite crew. They had mined both sides of the two central supporting piers on opposite banks of the spruit, and I learned with surprise that they had been engaged for fifteen hours continuously at this work, and had not yet completed it. The sun was nearly overhead, and the shadow of the span almost prevented my photographing at all, but I succeeded

in getting snap-shots at different stages of the work. One was of a group completing an excavation in which to place the explosives. These were ordinary dynamite sticks of the kind used in the mines on the Rand. Then I found another group on the other side of the pier, almost through with their task of covering up the dynamite with large stones roughly cemented with thick, clayey mud. The finished appearance I found in the masonry foundations at the end of the bridge, which I photographed, showing several large stones, part of a bagful of mud on top, and on one side the white fuses extending ready for firing.

At this juncture several scouts came riding in from a line of kopjes in the distance and reported the enemy in sight. Preparations were made to fire at once, and while the crew were putting on the finishing touches I quickly up-saddled and rode upstream, looking for a safe and convenient place to observe the explosions and photograph them.

As I did so I found that the sun had so changed its position that in order to take the pictures I would have to cross to the other side of the spruit, and this, with the enemy within a few miles and advancing, was rather annoying; but the photographs had to be taken, so up the stream I rode for nearly a mile before I found a suitable place to cross. Then I went back to within one hundred and fifty yards of the bridge.

Already two clouds of white smoke were ascending from the lighted fuses at one end of the bridge; then two more started to creep skyward, and as a man appeared on top and started to run across to where the dynamite train was waiting to steam away two more appeared. The engine whistled and moved off. Half a mile beyond, on a kopje, I could see Captains Ram and Reichman quietly sitting on their horses.

Between myself and my friends was the spruit with its

difficult banks, making crossing impossible, and the bridge with its loaded foundations about to be blown up. Holding my camera ready in hand, after a few half-nervous glances backward to see if the enemy were yet in sight, I kept my eyes steadily on the bridge and waited.

Suddenly one end of the central span raised thirty feet in

Captain Ram, the Hollander military attaché, General Delarey, and General Louis Botha breakfasting in the laager at Balmoral.

the air to a forty-five-degree angle; then, before it dropped, a cloud of smoke and dust shot above and around it—grey, pointed, and several hundred feet high, slowly expanding in dense clouds. Then came a dull boom, which echoed a few times, while half a dozen stones as large as walnuts fell near me, and one rock as big as a water-pail fell ten yards from my pony's nose, causing him to tug nervously at

the bridle and seriously disturb my efforts to turn another film into place before the next explosion.

Four times more came that dull boom, the end foundations going up together, and each time I snapped at the clouds of dust, my attention being divided between falling stones, a nervous pony, and the enemy somewhere behind. Then I rode quickly up to the wreck to take a last picture of the destruction, arriving there as the dust cleared away and while the dynamite crew were still on their train. The central span had fallen horizontally across the spruit, resting on the bases of the shattered piers, and it was necessary that it be broken by the use of another half-box of dynamite. My

Railway Bridge over the Oliphant River near Balmoral.

last film was exposed, and I hurried upstream again to find the ford and recross to friends and safety, for how, indeed, could I explain my position if captured in the act of blowing up the railway communications and taken before my late friends, the British?

As I found and crossed the drift I heard a terrific roar, followed by the familiar swish-swishing of a shell in the air, and looking beyond the bridge I saw the Boer "Long Tom," a ninety-six-pounder, mounted on a railway truck, her crew actively engaged in getting ready for another shot.

Turning in my saddle I looked back, and there, a mile to my rear, along the sky-line, where khaki-colored veldt

and brightest of blue skies met, I saw at regular fifty-yard intervals the advance-line of mounted English scouts slowly creeping eastward, and I knew that behind the rise General French, or Hutton, or maybe Baden-Powell himself, with ten thousand men, was advancing to drive back General Botha's little army of twenty-five hundred.

As we rode back to camp again I discussed the subject

The Italian Dynamite Brigade mining the piers of the Oliphant River bridge.

of that offer to the Generals of ten thousand pounds a year, and said it hardly seemed possible.

"Well," said one of the attachés, "I don't see why you should doubt it. England, in all her wars, has always tried to buy off the leaders on the other side; and you as an American, of all people, should not forget the case of Benedict Arnold." This from a foreigner, and recalling that unhappy incident in the history of my own country, settled

all doubts. Later I made careful inquiries, and found the offer was made through the medium of some female relatives of the Generals, who were sent out of Pretoria to rejoin their husbands. Fuller particulars I was unable to obtain, but it was officially stated to be a fact; and bulletins, announcing that Krüger anticipated a similar offer himself, together with the facts already narrated, were spread broadcast over the country.

Commandant Malan, who had presented me to Botha,

Colonel Ricardi of the Dynamite Brigade superintending the covering up of the dynamite charge before firing.

told me a story which I must repeat here. He, together with Johan Rissek, Surveyor General of the Transvaal, had been appointed by General Botha to represent the Boers in a military court of inquiry to be held at Kronstad. The case was one of British outrage. According to issued proclamations, whenever the railway was destroyed the nearest farm was to be burned by the British troops.

This had occurred. A piece of track was torn up near Kronstad; when it was discovered, a body of British

soldiers went to the nearest farm, confiscated the live stock, looted and burned the buildings, casting the occupants out on the veldt, and made prisoners of the men. Among the inmates was a woman who had but the day before given birth to a child. The doctor in attendance protested against the woman being moved, but the soldiers were obdurate; so she was carried out and laid on a mattress, and, later in the day, was removed to a neighboring farm some miles distant. The incident came to General Botha's ears, and he sent to General Roberts a protest against such brutality. A reply came, after some delay, asking that delegates be sent to a court of inquiry that had been ordered. Malan and Rissek were sent. The court was held, and the case dismissed as not proven; the witnesses for the accusers had, in one way or another, been placed out of reach. After several weeks' delay the two Transvaalers were returned to their own side and the subject was dropped. Yet there is no doubt as to the details of the outrage as given above. There were ugly stories of cases of rape by English "Tommies," and they were generally believed by the burghers and headquarters officials.

A pathetic tale came from Pretoria during the occupation. An old burgher was found crying bitterly. "Why, man," said a friend, "this is not the way to take defeat."

"Ah!" was the reply, "the English have destroyed my farms and taken my cattle; they have burned my home; and of my four sons, two are dead and two are prisoners; they have robbed us of our liberty, have taken our country and our capital; they have taken my house in this city, and, not content with all this, they have now robbed my daughters of their honor." The case in question was one in which two young Boer girls had been in the power of English officers quartered in their father's house.

This story was told me by a clergyman who came out of

Pretoria two weeks after its occupation, disguised as a Red Cross man. With him came my photographic partner, Mr. Aamsden, who had remained behind when I had left the day before Lord Roberts' entry. Mr. Aamsden made me a present of my overcoat, which I had left behind; so that now, in addition to its Alaskan experiences, it had been in Pretoria while the British were taking that city. I was sorry I had not been inside the coat, to have compared the entry into Pretoria with the entry into Bloemfontein; yet, from what Mr. Aamsden told me, it was rather a dreary affair, very little enthusiasm being displayed by the troops. "But 'The Lords,'" he said, quoting Colonel Blake's favorite phrase, "were most awfully glad to be released, and were immediately surrounded by a crowd of admirers." It's a great thing to be taken prisoner if you are released or escape soon enough—especially if you are a Lord.

CHAPTER XLV.

A COMMANDEERING EXPEDITION OF NO ACCOUNT.

AFTER two days at the front with General Botha's army I returned again to Machadodorp in time to meet Ryan, who had come up from the coast with a batch of letters—the first I had received in over a month. Then followed more days of news-gathering and cabling to London, not much of it very important, yet all of great interest, because it was from the enemy's camp, and the only news from that source. Several items of it cleared up the very vague reports issued by the Imperial authorities; as, for instance, my account of the capture of some of the Thirteenth Yeomanry, the capture of a construction train and three hundred and fifty men, the capture of over seven hundred of the Derbys; and, during the ten days' isolation of Lord Roberts, when De Wet had cut off his communications, my cables to London to the "Express" were absolutely the only correspondent's messages from the actual fighting front.

During these days at Machadodorp there was considerable anxiety lest the English would make some arrangement with the Portuguese to allow the landing of a British force in the rear of the Boers. A force was expected to come through Swaziland, and I cabled the report of the capture of some of their scouts. The report was false, but I did not learn this in time to prevent me going down near the Swaziland border to investigate for myself. A special train and a company of mounted police were sent to Barberton, the latter to commandeer horses and forage, and

to report on the Swaziland situation. By special permission of Secretary Reitz I accompanied the expedition. We arrived at the sleepy little mining town of Barberton, its mines abandoned, its stores closed, and its people either absent at the front, fighting, or else at home playing tennis and waiting for the end to come. The advent of our party with our handsome horses, and the uniforms of the Johannesburg police who made up our force, created a great stir. By the next morning there was not a decent horse within five miles, all having been spirited away during the night.

Blowing up of the Oliphant River bridge.

The commandeering party finally started across country, and I decided it would not be worth my while to accompany them; so I hunted up a boarding-house, where I got a glimpse of civilized life again, and took a good rest for a few days. Ryan was back at Machadodorp ready to wire me the instant anything of importance should occur. My impression of this pretty little oasis is best expressed in a letter I wrote from there to a friend in America. In it I said:

"Two years and a half ago I lay in a hospital on the

Chilkoot trail, half delirious with pain and fever, and for days dreamed of orange groves and eating great quantities of the luscious fruit. As I grew stronger I determined to find those groves. To-day, after spending half a year in the Arctic regions, a year in the States, and another half year 'way around on the other side of the globe in South Africa, for the first time in my life I have eaten the fruit fresh from the trees. No, I didn't 'walk arm in arm with myself through shady groves hung richly full with the yellow fruit.' I just picked up the usual garden tool, and going out into the back yard, raked off a hatful, then went around to the front of the house and innocently offered some to my host, in the same old way we help ourselves to apples in Pennsylvania. Yes, and we pile the skins and seeds on a newspaper, and later on carry it off to throw on a brush heap, and wonder why some people are foolish enough to pay fancy prices for such common fruit.

"I came into town by special train in company with half a dozen special police on a commandeering expedition. I left the police and hunted up the beautiful little boarding-house where I am writing copy. The arrival of the police made a sensation in the quiet little town. Only one train a week was run from this place, so the arrival of a stranger accompanied by a squad of mounted police was an item of some consequence. I introduced myself as a 'journalist.' I noticed that no one believed me. They evidently thought I was about to commandeer the whole place.

"At dark, while sitting unobserved in a corner, I heard a man make some careless remarks about the government. Not caring to be an eavesdropper, I got up and walked off. The man followed me and begged me not to give him away. I promised, and accepted his proffered cigar. After smoking one-third of it I changed my mind, and reported him—not for disloyalty, but for attempted poisoning.

"I am writing on a beautifully vine-shaded stoop, and trying to recover from the disgust of being unanimously regarded a spy. In every other part of South Africa the merest intimation that I was a war correspondent was the signal for a general opening of the path to all sorts of privileges and conditions; but here people talk in whispers when I am around, and stop altogether when I approach. Very bold ones volunteer some idiotic remark about the weather with a veldt-like smile, and then I yearn for my suspected power, that I might put the whole town in 'trunk,' as they call the jail."

Transvaal Burgher putting up white flag over his home on the approach of the British as General Botha retires. Taken near the Oliphant River.

After four days of this idleness, and having written masses of copy and indulged in the luxury of a bath every day, I decided that it was time to get back to Machadodorp. Inquiry at the railway brought out the astounding fact that no regular trains were running, and that I might have to wait a week longer before a special would come. I telegraphed to Secretary Reitz, who, on the authority of President Krüger, ordered out a special "trolley" (handcar) for me. This was pushed up the grades by Zulu "boys," who piled on top of one another, behind, whenever a down-grade was reached. The distance that it had to take

me was thirty-five miles. I started out with five boys and a conductor. After going about eight miles the conductor and three of the boys left me. Then I ran another five miles to a way-station, where I was provided with a new and better trolley and two new boys, who took me the rest of the distance; the "time" of the entire trip was about three hours. There were some steep grades, down which the car dashed over the rails at a terrific rate; I held the brake myself, but kept it clear of the wheels in order to make time. Occasionally we would pass the crushed and splintered wreck of a trolley by the track, and my conductor told me that they were the results of meeting unexpected "specials" coming up. We had no accidents, but that in itself was an accident.

The road ran along a small river descending toward the Koomaati, so that the entire trip was a descent. At the right was a range of low kopjes, bare and grassless, a few cacti and thorn-bushes relieving the monotony.

The end of the thirty-five miles brought me to the main line again, where, an hour later, I caught the daily express for Machadodorp, arriving there early the following morning.

During the first seven miles, my conductor, who, though a half-caste, was very intelligent, in reply to my inquiries, gave me the information which explained the mystery of an attack on the railway a few days before. The tale, with appropriate additions by myself, is as follows:

Adjoining a considerable portion of the Transvaal Republic at its extreme eastern border, cut off from the sea on the farther side by the Portuguese strip along the coast, lies the independent native state, Swaziland. Where these three countries meet is a high plateau, five to ten miles broad and thirty or more miles long. In the boundary treaties, agreed upon by men who knew nothing of the

country, the line of division between the Portuguese and the other two States was indicated by this elevation, the territory drained by water running eastward or westward deciding which States held legal possession. But, unknown to the framers of the treaty, this strip was nearly level. The waters collected in small lakes and ran neither way, and in the course of time it came to be called "No-man's-land;" also the refuge of outlaws and other refugees from justice, who, living among a few peaceful natives, success-

Private hand-car or "Trolley," pushed by Zulus, ordered out for the author by President Krüger. A South African twentieth century automobile.

fully defied the authorities of all three States. When war between the Republics and England appeared clearly inevitable, a few English residents, some of them burghers, to escape transportation or impressment, quietly collected their herds of cattle and drove them across the border into No-man's-land, to there await the conclusion of hostilities. There were, perhaps, fifty white men, including a few notorieties from "The Rand" and Lorenzo Marquez—men good enough if unmolested, having no enemies but the

law; and who welcomed the newcomers cordially, yet Mauser in hand, on guard against possible treachery.

Fifty miles northward ran the railway line from Pretoria to the sea; this was the line of the Boer retreat and the sole avenue of escape. Whether inspired by patriotism for England, hatred for the country whose laws they had broken and from which they had been forced to flee, late in June a small party of heavily-armed men, with a

Side view of the Malelane Bridge, wrecked by British Scouts, sixty miles inside of the enemy's lines.

dozen horses and two carts, descended from the plateau of No-man's-land, and, travelling mainly by night, seen only by a few frightened natives, reached the railway line near Malelane. Five hundred yards from the station a heavy iron bridge of a single span, resting on massive foundations of granite masonry, crossed the bed of a small stream.

This, like all the conduits on the line, was guarded by a squad of Boers. Early in the morning, before dawn, a

heavily loaded freight train crept slowly along the track, puffing out great clouds of smoke, and, with much noise and effort, vomiting fire and steam into the night air. The engine reached the bridge; then there was a dull explosion, followed by a crash and a silence, save for the subdued hissing of escaping steam, which deadened a few moans from the dry bed of the stream below.

With light came rescuing parties, by train and by horse, some having heard the explosion five miles away, though at the station near-by no one was aroused. In the early morning the burghers tenderly lifted a dead engineer and a dying fireman from the wreck, while nine others, chance passengers and trainmen, were carried to the Red Cross hospital at Waterval Oonder. Numerous arrests were made at once. Engineers arrived with supplies and a temporary bridge was constructed within ten days; but for that period the situation was serious for the Boers; for, though they personally could retire easily enough, their supplies and their heavy guns could only be transported by rail. A week later rumor told of a few stores and a farm or two looted near the Swaziland border. The authorities at Machadodorp were never agreed as to who destroyed the bridge, but my informant knew that off on the high plateau a small settlement of outlaws and refugees were enjoying new and abundant supplies of coffee and sugar. Later, the bridge was reconstructed and re-destroyed by the Boers themselves while retiring before Lord Roberts' steady advance. So ended the so-called Raid from No-man's-land, for a time a mystery, but soon forgotten.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE LAST DAY WITH KRÜGER—A TIGHT PLACE.

EACH day brought its new faces and strange stories to the new capital. A German officer serving in the Boer army told me why the English prisoners had not been removed before the surrender of Pretoria; of the four or five thousand held by the Boers, only nine hundred were gotten away to Nooitgedacht. It seems that preparations were made to remove them a week before the surrender, but when the guards went to the prison in Pretoria the British officers refused to march out. This German officer then went to the authorities and asked to be entrusted with authority to bring the prisoners out.

"How will you do it?"

"Order them to march out, one at a time, and if they refuse, shoot them at once with my revolver; it is entirely consistent with the rules of warfare, and after half a dozen have been shot, and the rest see that I mean business, there will be no further trouble; they will all come willingly enough, then."

The German was a man who would have done as he promised, too, and not only the several hundred English officers, but also the thousands of private soldiers would have been out of the way before the entry of the British troops. But the Boer authorities were too tender-hearted for such heroic measures. They were afraid that such an act would alienate foreign sympathy, and the English "bluff" was allowed to prevail, and Lord Roberts' entry into Pretoria liberated what might have been valuable host-

ages in the hands of the Boers when the time for final settlement arrived.

General Botha's secretary was chief in command at Pretoria in the last few days before the surrender. Speaking to him of Lords Manners and Rosslyn, I asked why they were not brought on to Machadodorp. He replied,

"I gave orders to their guards to bring them down to the station when I left on the train, and intended that they should be held for awhile longer, at any rate. The beggarly guards, however, failed to obey my orders, and as I did not discover it until the last moment it was too late for me to go personally and bring them out myself. When you see them again you may tell them for me that I thoroughly intended that they should remain prisoners and be removed to Machadodorp instead of being allowed to escape." It may interest my and Colonel Blake's Pretoria friends—"The Lords"—to know this.

Another item of interest was told me by a government official, while at Machadodorp, which has a strong bearing on the attitude the powers may adopt when the time for final settlement at the conclusion of the war shall come. My informant said, "My! won't the British be mad, when the war is over, to find that, after all, they have lost the gold mines for which they have really been fighting?"

"Why, how is that?" I asked; "surely the Boers haven't carried them off, nor have they been destroyed, as was expected."

"Well, I'll explain it to you," he continued. "You see, the government originally leased the mines with the provision that if at any time they should remain unworked for a period of six months the leases would revert to the government. Of course, the beginning of the war put a stop to all mining operations, and when the war was six months

old the government privately sold the reverted leases to French and German capitalists.

"Now, when the war is officially declared over, these capitalists, through their governments, will insist on their claims, and all sorts of unpleasant complications for England will be the result. Nothing will be done in this matter until the war is entirely at an end, for the powers desire that England shall have expended as much of her resources as possible in her contest with the Republics. Rather clever of the government, wasn't it? You see, in this way two of the powers have been furnished with a technical excuse for interference, and, in addition, the Republics have succeeded in enlisting on their side un-national capital, which is the force behind all civil power, and must fight for its rights wherever and by whomsoever assailed. England will certainly object to surrendering the mines, and then the trouble will begin." It will be interesting, now that the war appears to be nearing its final stages, to remember this phase of the subject, and see whether there will be any international developments to which my informant's remarks may be the key.

Two incidents of some interest occurred on the train before I returned to Machadodorp. One was the meeting with an acquaintance who expressed great surprise on seeing me. "Why," he said, "I heard you had been arrested as a spy and had been sent to the prison-pen at Nooitgedacht." This was welcome intelligence indeed, and I wondered whether such an intention on the part of the authorities had been father to the report. However, I went to the capital, to liberty or imprisonment, as the case might be, trusting to my papers and my innocence to make the affair not amount to anything more than another "experience." If I were arrested they would be bound to release me shortly, and the affair would be worth the trouble for the good newspaper "story" it would give me.

But when the other incident occurred I became worried. During all this time the British control over the cable company had been exercised to prevent the transmission of any news whatever from abroad to Lorenzo Marquez. This was done to prevent news leaking into the Transvaal, so late June had arrived and I had not even heard of the first signs of trouble in China. So serious a possibility as the siege of the legations never entered our heads. This knowledge would have been of great encouragement to the Boers, and for that reason it was kept from them. But as I was sitting in the railway car en route for Machadodorp I happened to see a newspaper which had been used as the wrapper of a bundle. It was the Natal "Mercury," and bore a very recent date, so I knew it must have come up the coast on the last steamer, and, only being used as a wrapper, it had accidentally eluded the vigilance of the English and Portuguese inspectors at Koomaatiport. I picked it up, and soon was reading of the Chinese crisis!

This news told me that my work in South Africa was over, for I knew no newspaper could stand the enormous expense I was entailing on the "Express" unless the news resulting was of the first importance. The Chinese affair had reduced South Africa and me to second place; and I was glad of it, for now I could return home—and I was a little homesick. Farther down the front page, in a minor paragraph, I read a few lines which were of much greater importance to me:

"President Krüger, in an interview with an 'Express' correspondent on June 5th, said, 'We will never surrender as long as five hundred armed men remain together.'"

It was true enough; but if a copy of that paper should reach Secretary Reitz's hands, and he should read that the President had said that to a correspondent of the "Express," London, after I had told him I represented the

"Journal," of New York, I might be subjected to an investigation resulting in something quite as unpleasant as my reported arrest and removal to the prison-pen at Nooitgedacht.

Arriving at Machadodorp in time for dinner, I entered the hotel dining-room in company with Ryan and another traveller. As I walked through the room looking for seats, I saw that almost every one there was looking at me in undisguised astonishment. Plainly, the report of my arrest had spread about the capital also. Over in the corner, at his accustomed place, sat Mr. Reitz and the attachés; there were no vacant places there, but it occurred to me that I would eat easier if I removed all doubt about my standing at once. So I walked boldly over to Mr. Reitz, and, greeting him and his companions, shook hands all around, passed a few commonplaces, saw at once that the rumor was groundless, and then, after this public recognition of my continued trustworthiness by the Secretary of State, I returned to my place and ate a good dinner, regardless of the general impression the suspicious crowd about me might have.

That afternoon I called on Mr. Reitz to have a little talk with him. He was busy writing, and asked me to sit down and wait a bit. As I did so, I saw a fresh copy of the Natal "Mercury," of the same date I had read in the car, lying beside him. Down at the bottom was that dangerous Krüger paragraph.

"I see you have some fresh papers," I said.

"Yes; you may look over them," said the Secretary; "I have not yet had time to do so myself." I took the "Mercury," read it carefully, and, when the Secretary was looking the other way, I tore off the corner containing the Krüger paragraph in such a way that it would look as though it had happened accidentally before coming into my

hands. In about ten minutes the Secretary turned to me and began asking about my trip.

After telling him all about it, although my mind was running on that Krüger paragraph all the time, I said,

"Well, Mr. Reitz, this is the last time I shall have the pleasure of calling on you. I am leaving for Delagoa Bay this evening. Is there anything I can do for you?" There was. He asked me to call again before train time to get some letters, and I spent the balance of the day hunting up friends and saying good-by to them. My train left about six o'clock. At five I called on the Secretary and received from him a bundle of letters; also his counter-signature on my passport, for a new rule had been made that no one was allowed to leave the Transvaal unless his passport had the signature of Mr. Reitz.

In addition, he scrawled a few words across its face, the import of which was that the authorities at the border were to allow me to pass without examination of my papers or baggage—an unusual privilege. After a last hearty hand-shake, and mutual expressions of esteem and good will, I left the fatherly old statesman who had been so good a friend to me. I deeply regretted the deception I had been forced to practice on him, but, since through it I never did either him or his country's cause the slightest harm, and may yet do it some good, my conscience does not worry me overmuch on that score; yet I would rather have had it otherwise, for I am sure I always enjoyed his implicit confidence.

CHAPTER XLVII.

SECRETARY REITZ GIVES ME A LESSON IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

MY strongest impression of Secretary Reitz is one I received one night before I made my short visit to General Botha's army at the front. I had been sitting up with the attachés, swapping newspaper yarns for military tales. It was nearly midnight when our party broke up. Before rolling into my bunk I went outside for a moment, and noticed a light in Mr. Reitz's compartment. Feeling far from sleepy, I thought I would see if he was of the same mind as myself about the folly of sleeping when there was talking to be done and stories to be told. I knocked at his door, and, without waiting for a reply, walked in. The old man was sitting in the corner of his bunk; beside him, on the opposite bunk and on the table between, were piles of papers and official documents scattered about. A long candle, stuck in a bottle, furnished the illumination. He was sitting with one knee over the other, reading a book, when I entered. Looking at me over the tops of his gold spectacles, he recognized me at once in the half-darkness.

"Oh, is that you, Mr. Unger? Come in; I was just reading something that will interest you, and I'm glad you happened in. Sit down," and he commenced pushing the papers aside to make room for me beside him, meanwhile placing the book on the table. Then, as was his custom, he reached for his box of cigars, and as I took one he refilled his pipe, saying, "I never smoke cigars; I wonder why my

wife sent me this boxful? However, I'm glad to have them to give to my friends; I notice you always seem to enjoy them," and he laughed gently, for I had acquired a reputation for always accepting cigars when offered. After lighting his pipe from the candle he said, "Look here at what I have been reading," and he took up the book he had laid down.

Mr. F. W. Reitz, Secretary of State of the South African Republic, about to ride out to inspect outposts at Machadodorp.

I looked at the cover, and it seemed to have a familiar look; it was worn and old, evidently having seen much service. Finally I recognized it. It was an American school-book, a child's "History of the United States," brought from America by some traveller, and in some way had drifted into the hands of the Secretary of State of the fugitive Transvaal government, here in its railway capital at Machadodorp.

"I've been reading here," went on Mr. Reitz, between successive puffs of smoke, "all about your Revolutionary War, and I find it is extremely interesting; and what's more, so very encouraging to us at this time. Look here," and he began to turn the pages; "I read here that in the winter of 1777, when your General Washington was at Valley Forge, near Philadelphia, his army was reduced to only fifteen hundred in number, and he knew the name of every man under him, and that at the same time the English held your principal cities of New York and Philadelphia. The comparison between that time and our present situation is so very striking and so much in our favor that I feel greatly encouraged. You see, this is our winter, and our burghers are suffering severely; the British have possession of all our principal cities—Bloemfontein, Johannesburg and Pretoria—yet we have a fairly comfortable capital here at Machadodorp; our armies have plenty of supplies, and, though scattered, they number at least fifteen thousand men, and their hearts are full of hope and determination. Don't you see how much better off, in comparison, than you were, we are in this our darkest hour? And yet you won your liberty and independence; and I think we will also, for I know we are in the right, and I think God will help us!" And the old man looked intently at me, his eyes glistening, his entire being radiating belief and complete confidence in what he was saying.

What an appeal to my school-boy enthusiasm and patriotism! I felt tears coming to my eyes; I sought in vain for something to say to encourage and comfort the old statesman and patriot sitting beside me, his eyes sparkling with hope and enthusiasm as he talked and turned over the pages of that familiar school-book. Then, as I thought how my country, where almost every man and woman and school-child within its boundaries were watching this un-

equal struggle, half a world away, with sympathy for the one contestant and anger for the other, our own hereditary enemy—as I thought how my country had stood aloof, her administration crying "Neutrality! neutrality!" while with her left hand she allowed and encouraged the selling of millions worth of horses and forage to England to use in the war, and with her right hand refused to insist on the enforcement of neutrality on the part of Portugal where American supplies for the burghers were being wrongly detained in the customs-house, that the armies of the Republics might be starved into submission—as these things passed through my mind I grew sad and sick at heart.

I told the Secretary to read on, and he would learn how the war in the Colonies lasted seven years, and that it was not until it had been going on for several years that the helping hand of foreign intervention was held out to us; that even then it was not because of love for us but for hate of our enemy that aid was given; and, finally, how the great General Washington himself never won a victory personally for several years, until the final surrender at Yorktown. I told him to remember these things; and then, if he felt that the burghers could keep up the fight against such odds they could in time hope to win, but only in time and under similar conditions.

"Ah," he said, "but perhaps Bryan will be elected, and then the United States will help us."

"Yes," I said, "perhaps he will; but it would be nine months before he could enter office, and another six months before Congress would meet, and then several months more would slip away before anything could be done. Can you hold out a year and a half or two years?" His face clouded as I said this, and he answered,

"No; we can hold out six months more, but if we have to depend on America under such conditions I am afraid it

will be too late. But," he said, brightening up again, "we are a God-fearing people; we believe in Him, and know that if our cause is just He will help us, and I feel that the longer He withholds His hand it is only to give England more time to repent of her wickedness before He lifts His hand to strike and punish her for what she is doing to-day in South Africa."

[As this book is going to press, the war has already extended half a year longer than this additional six months which Mr. Reitz foretold to be the limit of its endurance.]

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE BRAINS OF THE TRANSVAAL GANG.

WITHOUT further incident of note I passed out of the Transvaal gates at Koomaatiport, the officials being courtesy personified on the production of my magical passport with the Secretary of State's signature. A few days later a steamer left Lorenzo Marquez for Marseilles via the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. Among the passengers was Dr. Lingbeek, formerly of Johannesburg. He was a Hollander, and had been principal medical officer of the Hollander Red Cross Corps. Still earlier he had been President Krüger's private physician, and told me that the President, though old, was still in splendid health; his only ailment was granulated eyelids, which gave him considerable pain, but that his vital organs all seemed to be as healthy and in as perfect working condition as those of a child. In speaking of the Transvaal administration I said to Dr. Lingbeek, one evening,

"My experience among men and affairs has taught me that where two, three, half a dozen or more men are brought together for a common purpose they are usually dominated by one mind. One brain does the thinking for the crowd, and it is not strength of will or character, nor indomitable perseverance which acquires this ascendancy over other men. It is the possession of a faculty of mercurial quickness in adapting the means at hand to the changing conditions; a clever rather than a strong mind that does the thinking."

The Doctor assented that, generally speaking, this was true. "Well," I continued, "when I entered the Trans-

vaal I was eagerly on the lookout for that leading man of the government. I thought to find him in Krüger, but in my first interview I saw it could not be he. In my mind Krüger is merely a romantic figure-head for the government gang. They have selected the old lion-hunter and reposed the authority in him, relying on their ability to control his edicts by skillful and almost hypnotic suggestion.

"Then I looked to find the master-mind in Mr. Reitz, but

Loading live steers at Madagascar on French transport bound for China.

concluded after much hesitation that it was not he. Mr. Reitz is of too honest, too sincere and too trustful a nature to be the man I was looking for. The other members of the government at Machadodorp were mere puppets in comparison, and I wasted no time on them. Now, if I am right in my estimation of the situation, tell me who the man is, for I am convinced that the originator and manipulator of the schemes of these two republics in their amazing

defiance of and defence against the Empire of Great Britain must be one of the cleverest mortals alive."

"You are right," said the eminent physician. "The man you are looking for is in Europe. His name is Dr. Leyds; he is the brains of the whole thing. Get to know him and you will see it at once."

I have never met or seen Dr. Leyds, yet I believe him to be the arch-patriot—or conspirator, as you choose to look at it—of the South African Republics. I know little of his career, but what little information I have picked up merely corroborates my opinion of his position, so strangely unique in the history of this war. Dr. Leyds is a Hollander by birth. Some ten years ago he drifted to the Rand with a little money of his own, settled down in Johannesburg, later moved to Pretoria, took an interest in public affairs, gained the confidence of the government to such a degree that, after urging the policy which provoked the war and made it inevitable, he, the unknown of ten years before, was able to leave the country and live in a foreign capital during the period and danger of conflict, and, most stupendous fact of all, to carry with him, as financial agent, the sum of two million and a half pounds in gold, to expend at his discretion, without being called on to render an account. This feat places him easily at the top of the list as the most monumental and successful political adventurer of the decade. I do not say this in criticism of Dr. Leyds, for I believe he merely discovered the natural course of public feeling in South Africa, and honestly helped it to flow more easily through its legitimate channels. I insinuate nothing as to his expenditures, for I believe a man of his type finds sufficient satisfaction in the exercise of power alone to make him entirely above the desire for self-aggrandizement. To him and all like him I cry "Hail! may success follow in your path and lead your footsteps."

CHAPTER XLVIX.

Conclusion.

NOW that I am nearing the end of my story, I feel that there is still something to be said concerning the ethical side of this war. In the preceding pages I have, with all fidelity, recorded the varying sympathies for both sides which occasions chanced to promote. I feel that in my heart I oscillated from one side to the other, and that in so doing the mere accidental halting of my sympathies with either side would furnish no criterion that it was right and the other side wrong. Now, writing six months after my departure from the theatre of action, viewing the situation from a distance of half a world's circumference, I feel better able to think dispassionately.

The war started as a result of a plot. That plot at one and the same time enlists and alienates American sympathy; it alienates because it was an assault against a friendly power —a conspiracy to undermine and drive everything English out of South Africa and entirely uproot the last vestige of the Anglo-Saxon civilization and plant in its place that of the Hollander-Boer peoples, which, while it may be just as good, yet is at heart everlastingly hostile to everything British. As I have said earlier in this volume, I am convinced that the world-interests of England and America are identical—so the South African war affects us. On the other hand, the conspiracy elicits American sympathy because it was a natural movement toward the establishment of a United States of South Africa, for the same reasons that we ourselves exist as a nation to-day. As an Ameri-

can, believing in the republic, I find the admission that South Africa can be better administered by England than by the Republics is an admission that the Imperial form of government may be better than the republican, and this I thank God I am not ready to do.

Viewing the subject dispassionately, I feel that the little republics, having committed a technical blunder in invading a British colony and starting the war, have already been sufficiently punished. Having seen enough of the conflict to understand what General Sherman meant by saying "War is hell!" I am now for peace. The republics have lost their cities, the burghers have seen their homes burned, their herds driven off, their crops destroyed, their brothers, sons and fathers killed, maimed or captured, and their families broken up. The results of half a century of work have been blotted out. The conquest of the veldt has to begin anew. The Boers are the only people who can or desire to do it. To-day their armies are fighting for one thing only—for their flag. It seems to me that even if they are entirely in the wrong, complete national extinction is too great a punishment to inflict. Cut away three-quarters or nine-tenths of their territory; force them into the most barren, arid and unproductive part of their country; cripple them by treaties and restrictions, if you will; but leave them their flag—the *vieux couleurs;* and, though weighted by the deadening pressure of an indemnity that it will require an eternity to pay, the burghers will accept the terms, cease their heart-rending conflict, and there will be peace in South Africa. This is the opportunity of England. Viewed in this way, the act would be a graceful acknowledgment of American sympathy for the republics, and would go far to cement the friendship of our people for England. Neglected, I feel sure it is only a question of time—that America will stretch out her hand across the

seas to grasp that of a new United States, which will have wrested liberty and independence away from England, the hereditary enemy of our own privileges, and which will have done it without even our moral support, to our lasting shame.

From the "Friend," Bloemfontein, April, 1900.

LIST OF CORRESPONDENTS.

The following is a list of war correspondents in the field with the main column of the army:

HEADQUARTERS.

Central News.—Messrs. Beresford, Graham.
"Daily Chronicle."—Messrs. Donohue, Sheldon.
"Times."—Messrs. James, Macdonell.
"Daily News."—Messrs. Pearce, Wright.
Reuter's.—Messrs. Gwynne, Hutton.
"Standard."—Messrs. Maxwell, Bleloch.
"Daily Express."—Messrs. Hodgetts, Gotto.
"Outlook."—Mr. Goldman.
"Daily Mail."—Messrs. Barnes, Jenkins.
"Morning Post."—Messrs. Battersby, Churchill.
"Telegraph."—Messrs. Burleigh, S. Goldmann.
"Morning Leader."—Mr. Smith.
Cape "Times."—Mr. Nissen.
Cape "Argus."—Mr. Buxton.
Midland "News."—Captain Wester.
"Sphere."—Messrs. Woollen, Davies.
"King."—Mr. Shelley.
"Illustrated London News."—Messrs. Melton Prior, Owen-Scott.
"Graphic."—Mr. Fripp.
"Black and White."—Mr. Mortimer Mempes.

"Cinemetograph."—Messrs. Rosenthal, Hyman.
"Harper."—Mr. Dinwiddie.
"Laffan's."—Messrs. Rennett, A. Campbell.
"Scribner."—Mr. Mackem.
Philadelphia "Press."—Mr. Unger.
Stockholm paper.—Mr. Mossberg.
"Canadian."—Mr. Smith.
Manchester "Guardian."—Messrs. Atkins, Reiss.
Manchester "Courier."—Mr. Scott.
Chicago "Record."—Mr. Scull.
Swedish paper.—Mr. de Kleen.

With various regiments in this force but not attached to headquarters :

Toronto "Globe."—Messrs. Ewan, Hamilton.
Montreal "Star."—Mr. White.
Montreal "Herald."—Mr. Finn.
Sydney "Morning Herald."—Mr. Paterson.
Sydney "Evening News."—Mr. Spooner.
Sydney "Telegraph."—Mr. Wilkinson.
New Zealand.—Mr. Shand.
New Zealand.—Mr. Campbell.
West Australia.—Mr. Lane.
Melbourne "Herald."—Mr. Reay.
Melbourne "Age."—Mr. King.

From the London "Express."

The following extract from the London "Daily Express" of June 6, 1900, gives the casualties among the corps of war correspondents up to that date :

Now that Pretoria is really ours, the time is appropriate for counting the cost.

The casualty lists have shown how officers and soldiers have suffered. Here is a casualty list of non-combatants, as the war correspondents are described.

The designation seems almost absurd, nowadays. War correspondents may not shoot, but they face as much shooting as any soldier; and the wily Boer makes no distinctions.

It seems to have been the fate of half the correspondents to fall on the veldt, to fall ill, or to fall into gaol. The "Daily Mail" was particularly unlucky; Reuter's and "The Times," on the other hand, phenomenally fortunate. The "Express" correspondents have only had a few weeks of the war, but one of them has been laid low by the deadly enteric.

Mingled with their regrets at this sad price of success, press men may feel a just pride at the courage and enterprise of their colleagues. Cowards would not be shot, nor laggards taken prisoner.

OVER FORTY VICTIMS.

Mr. G. W. Stevens, "Daily Mail," died of enteric during siege of Ladysmith.

Mr. Alfred Ferrand, "Morning Post," killed at Ladysmith.

Mr. Albert Collett, "Daily Mail," killed in action, Molteno.

Mr. Lambie, Melbourne "Age," killed at Rensburg.

Colonel Hoskier, "Sphere," killed near Stormberg.

Mr. Ernest G. Parslow, "Daily Chronicle," shot dead by Lieutenant Murchison at Mafeking. Murderer, penal servitude for life.

Mr. Mitchell, "Standard," captured, escaped, took enteric fever and died.

Mr. W. Spooner, Reuter's, died of fever.

Mr. Charles E. Hands, "Daily Mail," dangerously wounded, Maritsani (recovering by last news).

Mr. A. G. Hales, "Daily News," wounded and captured.

Mr. Julian Ralph, "Daily Mail," struck by shell fragment at Belmont, and severely injured in accident.

Mr. F. W. Walker, "Daily Mail," wounded at Stormberg.

Captain Wright, "Daily Mail," injured while despatch riding.

Lord Delaware, "Globe," wounded at Vryheid.

Mr. P. J. Reid (son of Sir H. G. Reid), "Echo," seriously wounded at Khesis.

Mr. E. F. Knight, "Morning Post," shot with sporting Mauser bullet at Belmont, right arm amputated.

Mr. Winston Spencer Churchill, "Morning Post," captured at Chieveley, afterward escaped.

Lord Cecil Manners, "Morning Post," captured near Johannesburg and liberated.

Mr. Hales, Sydney "Morning Herald," captured.

Mr. George Lynch, "Morning Herald" and "Echo," captured, released, in hospital with enteric fever, now in England.

Mr. M. H. Donohoe, "Daily Chronicle," captured, probably released yesterday.

Mr. A. Graham, Central News, missing since May 21, supposed captured.

Mr. A. F. Hellawell, Rev. Adrian Hofmeyer, Lady Sarah Wilson, all "Daily Mail," captured.

Lord Rosslyn, "Daily Mail" and "Sphere," captured.

Mr. James Milne, Reuter's, captured.

Mr. John Stuart, "Morning Post," nearly blind after the siege of Ladysmith; recovered; now ill with dysentery.

Mr. W. Maxwell, "Standard," enteric fever during siege of Ladysmith, recovered.

Mr. Alfred Kinnear, Central News, enteric, invalided home.

Mr. Joseph S. Dunn, Central News, twice captured, enteric, recovered.

Mr. W. Martindale, Mr. W. S. Swallow, and Mr. Ch. Bray, Central News, enteric, recovered.

Mr. F. A. Stewart, "Illustrated London News," down with dysentery at Durban.

Mr. W. T. Maud, "Daily Graphic," laid up with enteric fever after Ladysmith, and invalided home.

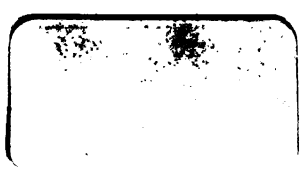
Mr. Bullen, "Daily Telegraph," invalided home.

Mr. H. W. Nevinson, "Daily Chronicle," in hospital with fever, now recovered.

Mr. J. A. Cameron, "Daily Chronicle," enteric; permanently invalided.

Mr. Brayley Hodgetts, "Express," invalided with enteric.

Mr. Lester Ralph, Mr. H. Lyons, Mr. R. C. E. Nissen, and Mr. L. Oppenheim, "Daily Mail," invalided.

JUL 29 1940

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